Remembering Bing

THE INTERNATIONAL CROSBY CIRCLE

Edited by REG BRISTO

no 52
CHRISTMAS
1978

( )

+ + + + CHRISTMAS EVE + + + +

When they were all tired of blind-man's buff, there was a great game at snap-dragon, and when fingers enough were burned at that, and all the raisins were gone, they sat down by the huge fire of blazing logs to a substantial supper, and a mighty bowl of wassail, something smaller than an ordinary wash-house copper, in which the hot apples were hissing and bubbling with a rich look, and a jolly sound, that were perfectly irresistible.

'This,' said Mr. Pickwick, looking round him, 'this is, indeed, comfort'.

'Our invariable custom,' replied Mr. Wardle. 'Everybody sits down with us on Christmas Eve, as you see them now - servants and all; and here we wait, until the clock strikes twelve, to usher Christmas in, and beguile the time with forfeits and old stories. Trundle my boy, rake up the fire.'

Up flew the bright sparks in myriads as the logs were stirred. The deep red blaze sent forth a rich glow, that penetrated into the furthest corner of the room and cast its cheerful tint on every face.

'Come,' said Mr. Wardle, 'a song - A Christmas song!'

'I pray, Mr. Wardle,' said Mr. Pickwick, 'that we are to have a song by the quite wholly estimable artiste - in fact, Mr. Wardle, we are to have the only song now needed to make this delightful Christmas Eve complete?'

'Fill up,' cried Wardle. 'It will be two hours, good, before you see the bottom of the bowl through the deep rich colour of the wassail - and now for the song. And indeed Mr. Pickwick, you have no reason to douht the estimable artiste we have to delight us....the charmingly delightful Mr. Bing Crosby to give us WHITE CHRISTMAS!' Fill up, all my friends...and here is that quite indispensable song...'

With apologies - and thanks - to Chas. Dickens and THE PICKWICK PAPERS.

THE INTERNATIONAL CROSBY CIRCLE: Issue No. 52 December 1978

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Annual Subscription £2.00 (four issues, dating from the first received); sterling equivalent for all European members. Six dollars American/Canadian members, 10 dollars if airmail despatch required; there is often a 6-8 week lag in surface mail delivery. An "X" in the box indicates your subs are now due, or shortly after receipt of this issue and before the next. A second "X" in red indicates you are well behind and no further issues will be sent unless remittance is received. Cheques/POs payable either to INTERNATIONAL CROSBY CIRCLE or Reg Bristo- it matters not. Banknotes are always acceptable, particularly if they save poundage or negotiating charges from overseas members.

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I HAVE RECEIVED SO MANY REQUESTS TO PASS ON CHRISTMAS WISHES THAT IT WILL NOT BE POSSIBLE TO PUBLISH THEM ALL: SO, THE ABOVE OFFICERS, OUR REGULAR CONTRIBUTORS, AND EVERYONE CONNECTED WITH THIS PRODUCTION, AND ESPECIALLY PERHAPS YOURS TRULY, REG BRISTO, WISH ALL MEMBERS PRECISELY THE CHRISTMAS THEY WANT: A HAPPY AND PEACEFUL ONE, FULL OF GOOD MEMORIES, GOOD CHEER - AND GOOD SOUNDS! WITH A SPLENDID NEW YEAR OF 1979 TO FOLLOW! CHEERS TO ALL.....

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The Bing/Bowie single LITTLE DRUMMER BOY turned out a "dead duck" Perhaps a bootlegger who lost his nerve!

We're delighted - and honoured - that one of our newest members is Mr. Justice X. Smith of the Supreme Court of New York... how odd to hear both Kathryn and Alan Fisher (Bing's butler) declare they were not "fans" of the artist Bing... YOUR EDITOR/SECRETARY WAS ONE OF THE PROUD RECIPIENTS FROM MRS. KATHRYN CROSBY OF ONE OF BING'S TIES, TOGETHER WITH A NICE NOTE. FURTHERMORE, IT IS A TIE I AM CERTAIN I HAVE SEEN IN PICTURES OF BING IN DAYS GONE BY....Dick Nettleton tickled a lot of readers with his story of his re-entry into the record world; and he has had a good response to his "BING IN LYRICS" project.....

HARRY GLEDHILL, 20 Frederick Avenue, Barnsley, S. Yorks, S70 6JZ:

A very amusing incident took place on the evening of Monday October 3rd when I went to the Palladium to see Bing. Bing had just finished his second song THERE'S NOTHING THAT I HAVEN'T SUNG ABOUT and I myself was just getting back my breath - I hardly dare breathe while he was singing. Then a rather tipsy Irishman (judging from his brogue) walked along the foot of the stage, shouting "Sing that one again, Bing! Sing that one again!"

Bing half turned, a little surprised. "Come on, Bing! Sing that one again!" repeated the Irishman. Bing then slightly over to him and in that lovely accentuated Irish brogue he did so well, said: "Sing it again? Ah, I would Paddy, but I don't think I could remember the words twice!" Needless to say, perhaps, by this time the ushers had the man by the arm and he was whisked away.

During the same performance during the medley Bing fluffed SAN FERNANDO VALLEY with: "I'm going to pack my 'quip', as you can guess, he finished the song 'ad lib' bang in tune with something about: "Come again tomorrow night - I'll try and get it right!" What a trooper...

Editor: Another "Irish" story! First we'd heard of it. Thanks Harry.

"What made my blood boil over the MIRROR and REVEILLE stories was that, in these licentious, permissive days, when disgraced presidents, humbug politicians, perjurious football managers, pop-stars freely boasting of their infidelities, vandalism rampart - and all these odious people actually being acclaimed as "heroes" - being respectfully interviewed on TV would you believe? - those papers, not to mention the 'authors' saw fit to pick on a man of unbelievable probity in Bing....for endeavouring against all the odds to bring up his children with a measure of responsibility and discipline..."

Editor: We said we weren't go to work ourselves up earlier in this issue - but this extract is so pertinent we couldn't resist including it.

THE TABLE ON PAGE 42 is to enable members to sort out the flurry of titles contained in (reading the columns left to right, Vols 1, 2 and (3 projected) of the CBS Embassy albums, the Sunbeam DISTINCTLY BING Vols 1 and 2, and the Jazum 39 and 40 albums....thanks to Ken Crossland....and what a surprise that Harry, Bing's son, is studying in London.... MR. T. D. SWAIN, 7 Caradoc Crescent, Monkmoor, Shrewsbury deplores, like all of us, that there was no official film or video tape record of Bing's Palladium shows in 1976 and 1977. It seems unforgivable that this was not done. He feels, however, that there must be many "amateur" cine-films and cherishes the hope that they may all be brought together and, finally, donated (copies of them at least) to some archives. Anyone interested in this laudable idea should get in touch with Mr. Swain at the address given in the first instance. It is a worthwhile idea but we must confess to some doubt as to the existence of fair quality films from INSIDE the Palladium.

WARMEST THANKS TO ALL CONTRIBUTORS - AND REGRETS TO SO MANY MEMBERS WHOSE FINE EFFORTS HAVE NOT, OWING TO PRESSURE ON SPACE, BEEN INCLUDED. THEY WERE ENJOYED NEVERTHELESS. One well-intentioned member suggests, if material is short, we should reprint some of the articles from years gone by. A fine idea @ if we ever run short! At the moment the problem is precisely the reverse one..... for instance, anyone caring to count the pages in this issue, irrespective of the number, will find it is indeed a bumper issue...

ONCE AGAIN - A VERY HAPPY CHRISTMAS TO ALL.....

IMPORTANT: BACK PAGE TOP LINE THE ADDRESS IS FRANCKLYN GARDENS

Some of my friends think I'm too tough a disciplinarian with my sons. I'm particularly well-known for this at Hayden Lake, where I take my four boys each August for a month of recreation....not everyone at Hayden - meaning parents - went along with my kind of regulations...its my claim that no kid has any business out after ten o'clock, fooling around in an automobile or laughing it up in beer parlours. A growing boy ought to get nine or ten hours' sleep, but my main concern is the trouble they might get into. Any dad who expects a group of seventeen or eighteen-year olds to wander around loose as ashes at two or three o'clock in the morning and not get into mischief once in a while is leading with his soft head....This has put me squarely in the middle. There have been times when I couldn't tell whether I was Captain Bligh in a Hawaiian sport shirt or the cream-puff of the world, for Dixie used to tell me that I was too lax, that I wasn't strict enough and that I forgot our boys' transgressions too soon. Lax or not, I'll bet they remember the spankings they got when they were younger....its not easy. It makes me feel a heel to be jumping them out all the time...I don't claim any prizes as a parent...My situation as a father is maybe a bit more complicated than that which faces most dads. Raising the sons of a movie-star presents special problems....

Bing Crosby in his CALL ME LUCKY,
written in the early 50's.

And the above inspires the following thoughts:

DAILY MIRROR, REVEILLE AND ASSORTED NEWSPAPERS - IN 1978

========== some "revelations"!

BING: ======== Some Monster!

CHAS. THOMPSON ======= Some friend!

To those of our members fortunate enough NOT to have seen, or have their attention drawn to, a series of articles in various newspapers fairly recently, the foregoing page made seem a little cryptic, a little obscure.

But to those who were affronted by those very articles - "revelations" they were supposed to be - they are perhaps expecting us to denounce them in ringing tones and righteous indignation. Whether or not we feel those emotions is one thing, but we do not feel the need to be too precise and too lengthy. We have as much liking for "punk" writing as we have for "punk" music. None at all.

It is, alas, quite an aspect of this 'sick' age in which we are, temporarily we hope, living to denigrate leading personalities - once they are safely out of the way. Image destroyers, character assassination - surely its symptomatic of the age that everyone knows what those odious terms mean?

And we have, in the process, had a supreme lesson in observing the avidity with which the gutter-press leaps to live up to that appellation. Also, we have had a lesson which most of us didn't really need - that on the "glorious Freedom of the press"! which certain men are willing to lay down their lives for..... I was moved to write to one of these scurrilous journals in protest; and the Editor did indeed demonstrate the Freedom of the Press - except that he printed about one-tenth of my letter. And it happened to be perhaps the least telling of the points I made!

But any Editor who prints a whole column of protest at one of his features is playing safe: he KNOWS he has offended an awful lot of people and some redress, no matter how small, has to be made. Hence the journals concerned did just that. After the protests had appeared in THE DAILY MIRROR I was further moved to write:

> "Not unexpectedly, your correspondence columns have shewn that in trying to besmirch the image of Bing Crosby - whatever your motives or those of the writer - you are doomed to failure. Bing's place in our affections is quite secure. What is surprising, and nauseating, is that you both tried."

No, you didn't see it in the newspaper. It didn't appear! Not surprisingly, I suppose.

But perhaps the most telling answer to those articles - the main burden of which was to show Bing as a inhuman parent - came within a short time when Bing's eldest son Gary appeared on the TV tribute programme. We haven't heard too much about Gary these past few years but he came over, we thought, as a fine chap. Really in the mould of his father, whatever his youthful peccadiloes. And what was tremendously apparent was his great respect and affection for his father.

And finally, without getting too magisterial, looking around us would it that more parents tried today to instill a sense of discipline into their families.

Oh dear! And we haven't even mentioned CHRISTMAS!

REMEMBERING BING

by BOB HOPE + + + + + + + +

I loved Crosby for 45 years, and I always will love him. But he'd hate it if I started getting maudlin. He wouldn't think it was me.....

Every year, on the day after Thanksgiving, my wife Dolores picks up the phone and calls a travel agency. She figures I'll be off on another overseas Christmas trip and just wants to help. Help get me out of the house, that is. Last year I wasn't going anywhere, and Dolores was so upset at the thought of having me home that I let her off the hook. I went next door.

I've done more travelling at Christmas time than anyone since the Three Wise Men. And they were wiser than I am - they quit after the first year. They had it a lot easier than I did, though. All they had to do was follow a star - and nobody wanted to follow me.

Christmas will be a little different this year, for all of us. There is no war, which means peace on earth, but good will isn't all it might be, and Bing Crosby is no longer with us. No matter where you were in the world, because of Bing every Christmas was white. And because we had him with us, it will always somehow seem a little whiter and a little brighter. Christmas without Bing singing WHITE CHRISTMAS is like a church without a choir.

But Bing is still very much around. He's a hant now and I guess I'm his principal target. I have the feeling that if I stopped insulting him simply because he's passed the bar a few steps ahead of me he'd be very much put out. He'd give it to me with a lot of thunder and lightning.

It will still be Christmas. There are countless millions of records all over the world, and Cros will get to sing WHITE CHRISTMAS at least another 23,000 times. There are 6,805 radio stations in the US alone and 90 per cent of them are under the impression that WHITE CHRISTMAS is our national anthem. The other ten play only classical music. That's 90 per cent Crosby and 10 per cent class.

A lot of people don't know that I have my own Christmas song, SILVER BELLS I promised not to make a recording of it when it was written 26 years ago, but even that hasn't helped any. I do it every year on my Christmas show and people write in the next day wanting to know the name of that new Christmas song they thought they heard.

SILVER BELLS was written by Jay Livingston and Ray Evans for THE LEMON DROP KID, a 1951 picture I did with Marilyn Maxwell. They didn't want to write a Christmas song because they figured Irving Berlin had a lock on the market with WHITE CHRISTMAS, so they did everything they could to make it different - like setting it in waltz time and writing about Christmas in the City. Its since sold 31,800,900 records and 1,643,687 copies of sheet music. And guess who made the first recording and got most of the play. Right - Crosby. But when I sing it, nobody recognises it.

That's the real reason I made all those overseas trips at Christmas time - to get away from Crosby and WHITE CHRISTMAS and SILVER BELLS. So the first thing the guys would ask for when that wonderful bandmaster Les Brown and I arrived at a military base would be WHITE CHRISTMAS and SILVER BELLS.

While I enjoyed every minute of those overseas trips, I never emjoyed the necessity for them. We were met once in Saigon by a bomb blast just as we arrived at our hotel. Its not exactly the ideal way to celebrate Christmas. I've been bombed out in my time, but that's the first time I ever came close to BEING bombed out.

But I can't - and don't - complain. It only happened to me once, and once was more than enough for thousands of great young kids who never came back. And a lot of those who did come back got home in something less than one piece.

Because we'd been there, Bing and I never forgot the GIs. So I'll still go to veterans and military hospitals, with Bing in spirit, at Christmas as well as on a year-round basis. I've even give 'em Crosby's WHITE CHRISTMAS and SILVER BELLS if that's what they want. I'm still going to nice nice to old Cros. After all, he was so nice to me when I was a child actor.

To all members the happiest of holidays and, as Bing would say:

> May your days be merry and bright - and may all your Christmasses be white....

(Reprinted from THE SACRAMENTO UNION (Family Weekly)- thanks to Ernie Smith (Dumfries)

BING'S FILMS: by KEITH PARKINSON

In the issue before last a member enquired about three films that had not been included in the list drawn up based on THE ROAD TO HOLLYWOOD filmography. Not unnaturally, the main compiler of the b[illegible] asked for information.

THE SHINING FUTURE: This film was made by Warner Brothers for Canada's Sixth Victory Loan. It has a running time of twenty minutes with a cast including Deanna Durbin, Benny Goodman and His Orchestra, Harry James, Herbert Marshall, Jack Carson, Cary Grant, Dennis Morgan, Charles Ruggles, Frank Sinatra - and Bing. The musical contributions of the last two named are the songs HOT TIME IN THE TOWN OF BERLIN and THE ROAD TO VICTORY respectively. Bing's contribution consists of the footage used in the short film THE ROAD TO VICTORY detailed in Fred's book, THE ROAD TO HOLLYWOOD. THE ROAD TO VICTORY film was used in 1944 to promote the US Fifth War Loan whilst THE SHINING FUTURE was distributed in Canada at the end of that year. Direction of what was primarily a compilation of filmed contributions was credited to Leory Prinz.

YOU CAN CHANGE THE WORLD: This film was released in 1951 by the Christophers Association and ran for twenty minutes. Leo McCarey directed the William Perlberg production and the cast included Loretta Young, Irene Dunne, Jack Benny, William Holden, Ann Blyth, Paul Douglas, Bing Crosby, Bob Hope and Eddie 'Rochester' Anderson. Bing does not sing in the film.

Editor: Thanks to Keith. Now the list must be complete except for the ROAD TO GLORY film. And if neither Fred Reynolds nor Keith Parkinson have details of it there must be room for doubt! It would seem that neither of the two dealt with above were shewn in this country?

BRILLIANT LEEDS

.....and the "brilliant" is applicable to the function and to the weather equally: We report on the annual function of the ICC.....

Possibly the wind was just a shade too boisterous; at least, the ladies, ever mindful of hair-do's, might say so. Otherwise the weather for our annual event at the Mansion Hotel, Rounday Park, Leeds was perfect and the decision to bring the event forward by three or four weeks was beautifully justified. Guests could settle down to enjoy the company of kindred spirits, Crosby sounds and distinguished guests in a happier frame of mind knowing that they wouldn't have to keep a careful check on the weather outside and pondering just how thick the fog might be by the time 11 pm was reached.

The day, September 17, was a lovely day by anystandards, blessed as we all were with an Indian summer. The sun shone, the sky was clear blue and with one or two exceptions, all was right with the world. But few present - at least, those who had been present then - could scarce forbear to compare it with the previous year's gathering when a shocked party arrived still trying to absorb the news that had broken around 36 hours earlier - the tragedy of October 14, 1977.

This year there were no TV arc-lights and microphones to contend with; no hordes of radio and newspaper reporters asking us the impossible questions such as "What happens now...?" "What did Bing mean to you.? and so on.

> Leeds exists in the minds of most people, we imagine, as a rather grim and dour city towards the North of England. Well, in some respects it IS that. But what large town isn't? Yet Leeds, in the West of Yorkshire, has more than its share of "green belt" - vast areas of common, or grassland, parks, and so on. And Roundhay Park must be one of Leeds proudest possessions. A beautiful park, with gently rising slopes and a prolificacy of trees. And this year, though they were changing into their beautiful autumnal variety of hues we were early enough for them NOT to be falling....truly a glorious sight in the sun of this year's September.

A record number of well over a hundred attended the event; and in view of the fact that quite a large number of those we had come to consider as "regulars" were quite unable to attend for very valid reasons, there is no doubt we would have had a remarkable attendance indeed. Indeed, there is every indication that soon the Mansion Hotel, which has served us so well for several years now, may soon be outgrown in its capacity to seat everyone for its splendid dinners. That however, is something for future assessment. Over forty of the guests on this occasion were there for the first time and it was an especial pleasure for the organisers, and certainly your Editor (and reporter!) to be able to put a pleasant face and personality to members who, up to then, had been friendly letter-writers.

One of the minor drawbacks to these functions is the impossibility of having a "rehearsal"! Everything has to be done off-the-cuff, as it were and the formula just develops. Imagine the consternation of a couple of the organisers, therefore, on arrival at the hotel in mid-morning to at least check that the amplifying system was work-

ing satisfactorily to carry the tones of BLUE OF THE NIGHT to find that the system was hopelessly fused at any one of a dozen points! Luckily Michael Crampton, organiser-in-chief, is well acquainted with the foibles of circuits and with no little degree of patience got the sytem working and the empty hotel was ringing with the deep tones of Bing preparing to open our proceedings with the time-honoured WHERE THE BLUE OF THE NIGHT....

A prompt start was made with everyone present - except our guest-of-honour! But Ken Barnes had telephoned to say he was leaving Essex at that moment but couldn't arrive until around 6pm! That he was coming, and obviously in a hard-pressed schedule, was more than good enough for us.

> A particularly delightful event this year was that for the first time we had a visitor expressly for the purpose from overseas in the delightful person of Astrid Lundgren who flew over from Sweden to meet her British Crosby friends. And very happy we were to meet Astrid. We hope she enjoyed meeting us.

On the debit side, however, there was the certainty of no cheery message from Bing and once again, Michael Crampton on opening the proceedings, had to refer to melancholy events which continue to dog us. A brief silence was observed in memory of Mick Drury and also of Vic Gilmore, both of whom had passed away since the last annual meeting.

The former of course had played a major, if invisible, part in these activities for many years for it was Mick who spent weeks before the day compiling a tape of guests' request records, interlarding them with his own very individual comments, and this was played during the meeting. Vic Gilmore had died just a month before, suddenly on a quiet Sunday afternoon when one of the last things he did was to write to Mike Crampton to say he would be there. Quiet, genial, dedicated Vic Gilmore - in fact, a typical Crosby man.

In fact, our Hull contingent was sadly depleted this year. Hitherto they had been ever-presents: Bill Warley, Vic Gilmore, and Frank Briggs and his effervescent wife, Rene were not with us this year. Frank continues to be troubled by indifferent health.

> After his usual workmanlike introduction, following the strains of WHERE THE BLUE OF THE NIGHT, Mike Crampton handed over to yours truly for "The Secretary's talk..." Most fortunately, I cannot now recall precisely what was said tho' I do recall it included stating my very real pleasure at once more meeting, or meeting for the first time, so many good friends.

I took the opportunity, also, to go over the ground as to why we meet at Leeds, and pointing out the inevitable fact that, with our widespread membership, ANY venue would involved 95 per cent of the members travelling and probably staying overnight - an expensive excursion these days. I also drew attention to an innovation at this year's gathering: this was that records, books, photographs and other Crosbyana items were on display and sale and that while this was an attractive addition to the programme - giving an air of a Crosby trade-fair! - we would need to be careful that it didn't develop too far in that direction. As it was, it did indeed prove an attractive addition to the day's events and meant that many many members departed that night with items they had not bargained - or hoped for.

Frank Murphy, down from the North East where he is busily reorganising Crosbyana (see report elsewhere) next presented the sort of Bing programme

he puts out over the Newcastle hospitals' network - records carefully selected with Frank's own disc-jockey style introductions.

THE FILMS:

None of these annual events would be complete without what has now become traditional - the Mack Sennett films which launched Bing, as it were, on the cinema screen.

> This year the films were particularly expertly presented, for which we are indebted to JOHN JOYCE who journeyed down from Gateshead with his equipment and exceptionally good quality films - both as regards picture and sound. They were screened without hitch and once again all were able to delight in seeing and hearing the youthful Bing in SING, BING, SING, WHERE THE BLUE OF THE NIGHT and the others. Seemingly no one gets tired of seeing these historic films and noticeably the audience is always rivetted. Whimsical trifles they may be but they provide some good laughs - and they provide that incomparable voice singing the songs we have recently been delighted to get - on LP for the first time - on the Biograph label. And seeing these films for the first time - as many did that night - one was able to understand the various "noises-off" that are heard on the Biograph album, e.g. car doors slamming, people interrupting Bing - and especially perhaps, the American cop who delightedly interpolates "Great! That's him all right!" as Bing goes into his whistle on BLUE OF THE NIGHT.
>
> And how easy it is - NOW! - to appreciate the Crosby screen potential on seeing again these Sennett shorts! The various partnerships introduced, so fleetingly, could easily be compared with some of the more epic partnerships (particularly that with Bob Hope) that Bing experienced later on in his tremendous film career. The easy nonchalance, the throw-away lines are clearly apparent - as well as the incredible casualness that came so naturally to Bing - are easily discernible in these budget shorts of 1931.

John Joyce took us quickly thro' to dinner time; here again there was an innovation. The Mansion had a new manager this year and to our surprise and pleasure, he made a speech welcoming us to the hotel and to the dinner his team were about to serve. He said that they were honoured to have our organisation there, remembering the great entertainer everybody loved and that he hoped we would enjoy the meal. Salesmanship - for next year? May be. Probably was: even so, it was pleasantly put over and much appreciated. The meal, as always, was served speedily and piping hot by a very efficient team. Except to say that it went down well, right to the last drop of coffee, it needs no description.

> Mid-way through dinner our guest-of-honour did indeed arrive! Arrangements had been made of course for one serving to be kept hot and delayed pending Ken Barnes arrival and no doubt it was particularly needed after the long drive from Benfleet.

We had now arrived at around 7.30pm and after a decorous passage of half an hour or so, spent in chat on things Bing, it was my pleasure to introduce the man who had made such a special journey and who had done so much to shape the final three years of Bing's career - and to shape it heavily the way of Britain. He deserved, and certainly got, a heartwarming reception.

Ken then proceeded to deliver a most fascinating 1½ hours talk - not, as you

you will discover later on, always and precisely to everyone's ubridled and complete delight, but always fascinating. And as Ken had thoughtfully brought some of the "studio-floor" tapes made during the recording of SEASONS - that is, tapes that had recorded everything that went on, the back-chat, the mild disagreements, the rehearsal (for want of a better term!) and which were not, of course, needed for the completed album - it will be understood why Ken's talk can only be described as fascinating.

> Can you imagine, for instance, the dead-pan voice of Bing assuring Ken Barnes that he didn't know APRIL SHOWERS? Well that's what he did and seemed to have Ken concerned. That is, until he did a perfect "take" in one, half an hour later! Then Bing was aghast at having to learn the admittedly tricky verse of JUNE IS BUSTIN' OUT ALL OVER. Out of the question, said Bing. Ken insisted that the arrangement just had to have the verse. Thus we heard Bing, presumably leaning on the piano, and humming and la-la-ing the verse to Pete Moore's piano. Learning the verse on the spot forsooth!

And what did emerge from some of the back-chat that went on between the control-room (where Ken was) and the studio (where Bing was) showed that a rare rapporte had been forged between the two. Both gave and took at different times, yielding here, insisting there, using Bing's colossal recording experience - making indeed, a highly efficient team.

Incidentally, Ken ppinted out that the verse in question by Rodgers and Hammerstein is NOT easy to sing; in fact, is a very clever piece of composing - making that composing team the giants they were perhaps. But Bing quickly mastered it on the spot.

Ken Barnes went on to say, or rather to illustrate, that the onus of being a record producer does not by any means end with getting sounds onto tape - that is, after studios have been booked, orchestras engaged, arrangements made. He has to rush around settling rights, settling royalties, credits, clearing this, clearing that, making certain no other agreements are being violated, no copyright infringed and so on. And then the haggling with interested parties! And here Ken made an interesting point when he disclosed that BING CROSBY ENTERPRISES is an entirely separate entity from the Crosby Estate, both requiring differing approaches and methods. Its an interesting aspect.

> Then Ken went on to tell us that he had had the opportunity, through Basil Grillo of BING CROSBY ENTERPRISES of listening through the complete repertoire of Bing Crosby-Buddy Cole recordings - which totalled something between two and three hundred! Discarding many, Ken had finally selected about 90 tracks which he thought were capable of being reissued in more modern form involving the use of strings and vocal choruses. This would be possible because the accompaniment was often unobtrusive, minimal, and was desirable to give the recordings, a more attractive modern setting for today's marketing requirements. As you will read, this was received cordially - but silently! Ken did concede that the Crosby voice was magnificent almost throughout these 1950 recordings and he had high hopes that something really worthwhile would eventuate.

And talking of high hopes, I'm not sure that that story, narrated by Bing himself, that he thought it was Sinatra singing SUMMER WIND when in fact it was Johnny Mercer, hasn't become my favourite Crosby story! Bing didn't sound dead-pan - but surely he must have been!

Ken's talk virtually rounded-off what had been a fast-moving and always interesting function - though final random thoughts include the pleasure

of introducing Mrs. Crampton (Sen) to the gathering (Michael's mother) who did so much in earlier days for these annual meetings when, in fact, they were private enough to be held in her house; seeing again Mrs. Crampton (Jnr.) and the cause of her absence last year - 12-months-old little Iaian Crampton....of meeting - and remembering, so many new Bing friends - I particularly recall the lady who gave me such assurance on the dark way home by presenting me with - A SHILLELAGH! And noting the not insignificant fact that just under 12 months from the passing of the peerless Bing we had a record attendance....Remembering, too, that when Mike Crampton who does take on the enormous task of organising things in Leeds, asked the guests whether or not we should come "here" again next year, have a buffet, or change the format in any way at all getting a resounding "Same next year... same place!" Which would seem to indicate complete satisfaction with the day's events.

Ken invited "any questions" after chatting and playing his behind-the-scenes tapes - and thereby prolonged his talk by a further ¾hr! One of the questions asked for the progress on the book it had been reported Ken was writing on Bing. Ken was able to reveal that he had indeed been working very hard on it and was being pressed by the publishers, Hamish Hamilton - and as we write we have every hope that a leaflet from the publishers will be included in this issue.

The plans are far-reaching indeed, for apart from Ken's text the book will contain a discography and a filmography. Also, Ken is busily tying up all the loose ends with the Crosby office and the record companies in order that a record package may be issued concurrently with the volume.

The publishers - and Ken - have requested our assistance in helping to promote what will undoubtedly be quite a project. Needless to say, we have offered all assistance possible. Preliminary ideas of ours are that the leaflet(s) be made available to as many as possible - and that when publication date is near, that our members bombard the BBC (both National and local) with requests for Bing records plus asking the (naive) question: Do you know of any new BOOKS on Bing Crosby? Any other ideas to help the thing along would be much appreciated by your Editor and by the publishers, not to mention Ken Barnes.

MANY people seem to be horticulturally bent: this "rose" and "tulip" subject continues to crop up in the mail. BRENDA TROWELL, 47 Park Rd., Hastings, E. Sussex, TN34 3TH for instance: I ordered a rose called WHITE CHRISTMAS for its Bing connections. Having done this, I decided to write to Andersons Rose Nurseries (Cults, Aberdeen, AB1 9QT, Scotland) explaining why I chose WHITE CHRISTMAS and suggested they might name a NEW rose after our beloved Bing, giving examples of a blue rose (?) as BLUE OF THE NIGHT, a golden one GOLD OF THE DAY, or perhaps a deep red one as just BING. I eventually received a reply which I think is at-least encouraging.

Andersons replied that they thanked Brenda for the suggestions and would most certainly include them with the many requests they get for consideration with their new seedlings this coming season...

I can usually manage a tidy row of runner beans and am not much a rose expert; but I believe it is a fact that anyone producing a BLUE rose will hit the jackpot for so far it hasn't been done.... But full marks to Brenda.

SMITING THE PHILISTINE!

++++++++after a Sabbath in Leeds - but only metaphorically, of course....

BY JOHN MARSHALL

To anyone attending the recent Leeds clambake who found their enjoyment of the latter section of Ken Barnes's address spoiled or interrupted by an odd, high-pitched keening noise, with an obligato of something not unlike teeth grinding, I tender a belated apology. Frankly, I was so engrossed in peering through my private red mist at mental pictures of gibbets, stocks and the like that my behaviour patterns may have left something to be desired and in any event it was possible I was mistaken.

Could this kindly, well-intentioned visitor actually be planning the rape of my precious Bing and Buddy Cole 'library', in a manner more reminiscent of Munich during the '30's than in this sylvan setting, on a comfortably crisp Autumn evening? Oh - not to put too fine a point on my distress - CALAMITY!

Retrospect - and some cold compresses later - I am assured that I am not, after all, a silly little goose and there is indeed every possibility that Ken (the very same as guided Ulysses through his final fantastic odyssey and brought him home weighed down with booty, new albums and awards) is about to refurbish a treasure trove that needs it slightly less than the Elgin Marbles need doing over with two coats of silk vinyl emulsion. Standing in a hotel that boasts more than its share of adjacent trees, with such a proposal - well, you really have to take your hat off to the man!

Speaking as someone fit to be tied, I know perfectly well that I am far from alone in rating, for example, the Autobiographical set very close to the top of my Crosby list - and not forgetting naturally the host of other tracks. In the "set" there was the brief, casual but always informative preamble, setting the song into the chain of his career. In little more than a brief chorus, the song after songs that formed a heady bundle of vignettes and were created in an atmosphere of warmth and intimacy that escaped any other studio location I'VE ever heard. The music so very tasteful and subdued, allowing Bing to be totally laid back, or occasionally to flex his muscles as the mood required. Had I been asked for some additional ingredient to add to this brew, my one suggrstion would have been that they go back and add a couple of dozen new albums to the set. Hearing this same material, a couple of decades later at the Palladium, with a rip-off disregard for sentiment and only an exercise in agility, expertise and endurance, the autobiographical issue took on a new importance to me.

It has been said that the Buddy Cole library was amassed during an attempt to fill a temporary vacuum in Bing's mid-Fifty period. Very throw-away stuff, not intended for posterity and clearly not costing the earth. Now that we have that very posterity crowding in on us - we know better. It is, simply speaking, an elongation of that very same wonderfully relaxed autobiography mood and having it available, in any form, should really be at least adequate.....however.

"Of the 200 and some tracks (of Buddy Cole and Bing) available," Ken states, "we will be using around 60 or, in other words, the tracks with Buddy Cole on piano alone. Anything with that AWFUL MID-50 organ sound is right out of it." And here he laughed! oblivious to the many

millions of fans of this very instrument (I include Reg "Fingers" Bristo and his mighty Yamaha) who have spent more loot on their Hammonds &c than they will ever spend on records - and we won't mention the 50's Ethel Smith! To those, then, some of whom might well have recognised the tasteful Mr. Cole for what he is and to anyone who wants EVERYTHING on record, the teeniest of raspberries. The red mist was rising above my trembling knees as Ken continued: "Then we will replace the intro with a sweep of strings, allowing Bing and the trio the centre of the stereo stage while Pete Moore fills in the two empty mono sections of the arc with additional instrumentation." So much for the merely hinted-at filigree and the innuendo of guitar, with the man snuggled right under your ear. The point being made, as I gathered it, was that today's audience would not respond to such a Spartan assemble as originally put on wax, requiring as it does oodles of gut, the cat variety, before it can appreciate anything remotely like a good, solid, tune. The Mantovani syndrome perpetuating into an age that more rightly expects the violin section to have safety pins through their noses and would, in any event, only listen to a Crosby record if heavily sedated. It also implies, per se, that a format specifically designed to let Bing swing to his heart's content always was inadequate and that history CAN be rewritten, homogenised and made palatable, guaranteed not to hurt the sensitive ear 'oles of anyone under 30, always assuming that they can still hear, at all!

I am not knocking the conception, or the advances, in recording. Caruso no less had a face-lift a while back and on the whole it never made the charts but Enrico has not suffered unduly. Its been done before and somehow it never has come off with any conviction. Bing hated wearing his "rug" and I'm certain that he is presently spinning at something more than $33\frac{1}{3}$, wondering just how soon it will be before Whiteman and the others are filtered out on some computor, to be replaced by The Stranglers.

So, it would provide a perhaps useful novelty, this amended library, and if it makes a few bob, what the hell? That IS show-biz, but just so long as it doesn't start clomping all over a rather unique and quite pristine chapter in one of the nicest, if not the greatest, stories every told....

Editor: A pregnant pause would seem to be called for at this juncture.... - after which we might enquire

LOOKING BACK....OR LOOKING FORWARD ?

It will not go unnoticed, naturally, that John Marshall in his piece above which will find firm agreement in Crosby circles, is as mindful as anyone of what Ken Barnes did for Crosbyana in the last three or four years of the Maestro's life. Didn't he remark on "this same (Ken Barnes) guided Ulysses thro' his last fantastic odyssey" or words to that effect and certainly shrinks from being the instigator of a LYNCH BARNES posse! But with all due deference feels that dissenting voices from some of the views - not to mention plans - will not result in the total breakdown of democracy as we know it!

And, to coin a phrase, John can include your Editor as a dissenting voice - indeed, I was constrained to remark in thanking Ken for his fascinating talk at Leeds (and which suffered not in sincerity for a' that) that we would forgive him some of his heresies! Did he not, forsooth, write off a large slice of the 1930's Bing? Had he not been an honoured and very welcome guest there can be little doubt that such a slicing would have produced heckling of a distinctly hostile nature. This is not an opinion; I was told so, ever so gently I might add, afterwards.....

For in dismissing the 30's Ken was indeed cleaving away at the very grass roots of Bing Crosby's fabulous and enduring appeal. At the risk of repeating ourselves for the ten-thousandth time, anyone who didn't experience that pulsating, breath-taking debut of the young Bing singing PLEASE, HERE LIES LOVE, LEARN TO CROON (sic), WITH EVERY BREATH I TAKE, BROTHER CAN YOU SPARE A DIME and scores of other epic numbers, has a man-sized job on in even trying to appreciate what the Crosby career was. And is.

> In fact, Ken made (for me) a very wry analogywhen he jokingly remarked that you no more wanted that sort of singing - and orchestral playing - than you wanted people taking the retrograde step of wearing 50/- suits! Well, when I look around at the washed-out jeans, rumpled and sometimes crumpled, the assorted cheese-cloth shirts, worn inside or outside aforementioned flared or patched jeans, the safari suits, the army jackets, anoraks (with or without sergeant's stripes) I am forced to the conclusion that a return to the fifty-bob outfitters would be no bad thing for the general decor. And that decor ranges from the village market square to Oxford Street and Regent Street themselves. I am assured that his motley collection of (mainly, but not always) scruffy gear is good - young people are expressing themselves. Doing their thing (sic). All I can say then is that self-expression has become singularly uniform for that casual, often down-at-heel, appearance is universal and just cannot be comprehended as "giving self-expression". It is, forsooth, more uniform and standardised than the regalia &c. worn by the Household Cavalry at the Trooping of the Colour. In short, a complete negation of individuality.

With a suit, 50/- or otherwise, one could at least vary the material; be single or double-breated, have it with or without waistcoat, vary the tie (they really ARE redundant these days, aren't they!) and effect quite a variety of appearance. And still look wholesome. I am no great lover of the industrial giants which control our lives just as effectively as any government but I did feel a wave of regret when I read that Burton's were having to close hundreds of their tailoring shops simply because not enough people are buying suits these days.

But we are straying too far.....and what has to be borne in mind, first and foremost, is that Ken Barnes is a record producer of TODAY! And today's record-making world makes the jungles of Borneo seem comparatively tame. A vicious, give-nothing-take-all, fast buck jungle.....which does make Ken's efforts in harnessing the old Bing to new sounds over the past 4 years all the more remarkable.

True, we like to think, and mostly are right, that vintage Crosby albums will sell. Not spectacularly; will not shoot up to the accursed "charts", but will seel steadily and soundly. That, alas, is NOT what record companies are looking for today. They have, perforce, to do it with their classical libraries - invest in performances and know that the return might continue to come in for up to 20 years. Popular music, however, is placed in an entirely different category, and a slow steady return is the last thing desired.

SO, AT LAST, BACK TO BUDDY COLE..

John Marshall ventured the opinion that the "Buddy Cole Bing Era" occurred in a temporary vacuum in the Crosby career - or may have been so believed by some. There may be some credence in this view. Bing's association with Buddy Cole came at a time, perhaps, when radio was taking the knock-out punch from television. And radio had been a hefty plank in the Crosby

career foundation. So it can at least be said that the association was at a time of transition. But that in no way prevents the Cole/Crosby saga from being a tremendous one. No-one can possibly doubt that Buddy Cole was an exceptionally gifted musician - both as an instrumentalist on piano and organ, and as an arranger. And certainly not least as a "grafter-on" of arrangements AFTER Bing had recorded the songs to the accompaniment of his, Buddy's, sole piano. The story is sufficiently well-known perhaps that Bing (and often Rosemary Clooney) would record up to a score of songs at any one time (prodigious in itself) to Buddy's piano-playing; afterwards Buddy would add the rhythm section, organ and other solos while, presumably, Bing was off adding to his reputation as no mean golfer.

With between two and three hundreds Cole tracks it would be wholly invidious perhaps to start naming the "best", but CHICAGO, WHEN I TAKE MY SUGAR TO TEA, IN A LITTLE SPANISH TOWN, and certainly the best OL' MAN RIVER Bing ever made was with Buddy. These are, of course, the type that have already been selected for commercial issue. They were broadcast in the States at the time, of course, in radio programmes and used extensively too in the AFN networks in Germany for the occupying American forces - among others.

> Sadly, Buddy Cole died prematurely when he himself felt he had only scratched the surface as regards potential with the Crosby voice and attributes. It was known he had much grander ideas in mind. And clearly Bing himself must have thought very highly of Buddy Cole to have selected and used him so extensively.

So, will it be akin to giving the Elgin Marbles a couple of coats of vinyl emulsion to "improve them"? For, as will have perhaps been gathered, it is Ken Barne's proposition to garnish these tracks with strings and chorus and give them, thereby, a fuller and perhaps more modern projection. The possibility's there, one must confess - and as Bing once remarked in song. The voice was always full and prominent (just the way we like it!) on these Cole tracks, and the accompaniment was minimal so we can at least concede that the experiment, if such it be, will at least prove intriguing in the hands of Ken Barnes and his able musical lieutenant, Pete Moore.

So judgement must be reserved for what will undoubtedly be a remarkable technical undertaking, and in passing, we might say again that the actual business of getting coherent sounds onto tape or record these days is indeed a wondrous process.

But perhaps we do get just an inkling of that red-mist before the eyes that the highly literate John Marshall experienced at Leeds, on a sunny Sabbath - and also remark that there wasn't much wrong with the Cole/Bing tracks to start with!

> Younger readers may not know that a celebrated mass-producing tailors in the 30's (Colliers) provided suits for £2.10s. "made to measure" and was proud to adopt their selling slogan of "THE FIFTY-SHILLING TAILORS" and it did indeed become one of the cliches of that decade. And those same younger readers may not be too aware of the Buddy Cole era; it is exemplified in the fairly recent MUSIC FOR PLEASURE album MFP 50249, which itself was a reissue of the Brunswick NEW TRICKS (for an old dog) album. (LAT 8217). It is worth mentiong this for the more recent MFP makes no mention of Buddy Cole, or any other accompaniment for that matter. And this is the album, of course, which has the very early WHERE THE BDUE OF THE NIGHT track as a distinctly odd-man-out!

BEFORE CONCLUDING OUR REPORT ON THE LEEDS FUNCTION ------ you read in previous issues of the Rose Garden memorial down in Lynouth and instigated by our indefatigable friend, ENA HOOLEY, of 4 Olivers Battery Caravan Park, Winchester and the real friendship occasioned thereby between Ena and the Mayor of those two Devon towns. And indeed, the Mayor went further than is usual by providing a VISITOR'S BOOK for those who visit the Bing Crosby corner but to get the real Crosby hard-core in the picture, this Memory Book was taken to Leeds where the guests were all invited to sign it. This they did, adding some touching tributes to Bing in the process. Thus the book was well and truly "launched". On its way back to Devon, it was also available at one of Phil Clarke's "Southern" meetings where more names were added.

It would be churlish of us not to acknowledge the host of appreciative letters received following Leeds. Perhaps the one from DENNIS STEELE and his wife Ruby may be taken as illustrative of their contents:

> Just to let you know how much my wife and I enjoyed the annual meeting. The usual friendly--and record - crowd, the most interesting Ken Barnes, a very good meal and of course, the Bing films and records. Many thanks to Michael Crampton for the arrangements, which constituted no mean feat.
>
> Also to yourself and Frank Murphy for the time involved in setting up equipment, carrying and fetching records, tapes, &c. Anyway, I hope you enjoyed your visit to Yorkshire as much as we enjoyed seeing you here. I sincerely hope next year's meeting exceeds this - in numbers, that is. A lot of people just don't know what they are missing. I find that I could go and chat to anyone without the slightest embarrassment and find myself among friends - unlike a lot of gatherings. But, as I've said before, the Crosby Circle is a friendly gang...

AND: Mr. R. A. Morris, 35 St. Ives Grove, Leeds - I must say how much I enjoyed the gathering at the Mansion Hotel. Those Mack Sennett films were out of this world - and the nostalgia almost overpowering. I hope the organisation goes from strength to strength.

> Editor: Such appreciation is most encouraging. For myself, I love visiting Yorkshire and have only one regret: that time and circumstances just do not permit me to sit down and chat with EVERYONE - though I do make a point of at least meeting everyone and saying Hello! There is indeed something unique about a Crosby gathering - as Dennis Steele remarked above, the aura is astonishing and certainly one doesn't have to wait for introductions to get involved. There is no ice to be broken.... and just one word about those "who don't know what they are missing." Well, just to let a lot know that we fully understand about expense, and travelling and physical inconveniences. And we know, too, they would be love to be with us.... We know they are there in spirit.

As we have noticed elsewhere (!) Bing's name has cropped up quite a lot in the newspapers this last quarter. Seems someone suggested a statue to Bing in the London EVENING NEWS for on a flying visit there in October I bought an evening paper and read a letter from someone debunking the idea. The writer said "...I am not denying he gave pleasure to a lot of people with his singing... but he also made millions of dollars." Fair comment - and while it is perhaps debatable whether any entertainer merits a statue. Bing at least earned - and deserved his millions, unlike some pesudo "super" stars who, to use their own cynical phrase, 'laugh all the way to the bank' for purveying rubbish.

THE BING CROSBY HISTORICAL SOCIETY

+ + + A REPORT ON AN INTRIGUING AND EXCITING AMERICAN ENTERPRISE:

BY COLIN PUGH and THE EDITOR

In Tacoma, Washington, USA there lives a man today who must surely rank among Bing's most ardent admirers and appreciators - and he doesn't possess a single Crosby record. And the chances are that you have never heard his name. He is, in fact, Mr. Kenneth Twiss living at 6814 South G Street, Tacoma, WA 98408, USA. He is a retired chef and one of Tacoma's senior citizens.

Back in 1948 Ken had amassed such a collection of Bing Crosby recordings that at the time it represented a complete collection, spanning as it did, 22 years of Bing's recorded output. And it was in that year that he donated that entire and unique collection to the Tacoma Public Library. Parallel to this donation was born the idea that something could be done about Bing's birthplace - Tacoma, or even the actual house itself where he was born. Something that would make it a place of lasting interest, even a historical landmark. To this end, Ken has been applying himself ever since. Today, 30 years later and with the collection still in the library vaults, Bing himself has passed on and Ken, as stated, is now retired and has ample time to devote to his project and he is renewing his efforts with far greater intensity.

Bing was born at 1112 North J Street, Tacoma and it was Ken's original idea to purchase this property as a memorial, a home for the collection and a showplace generally for Crosbyana. So the possible acquisition of the property was one item on his very extensive agenda. Other major items included enquiries into zoning regulations affecting the property for the use specified, examining the possibility of objections from neighbours and the neighbourhood in general; obtaining opinions, suggestions and interest from a wide cross-section of collectors; appointing an existing foundation to adminster the funds in perpetuity for the project; legally forming, naming and incorporating a Society; obtaining approval of the Crosby family to use Bing's name; obtaining a legal document from the Library Board stating its role in administration etc. And the list goes on and on. One of the neighbours, and an important one, is St. Patrick's Church just across the street from Bing's birthplace. Bing was christened there and on October 16th, 1977, the Tacoma News Tribune printed a copy of his baptismal certificate, also showing Bing's birthdate as May 3rd 1903. This certificate was accompanied by the following article:

> "DISPUTE OVER CROSBY'S BIRTHDATE SETTLED - copy of Bing's baptismal certificate by Jim Erickson.
>
> Everyone was fooled about the birthdate of the late Bing Crosby, even the popular entertainer himself.
> When he died of a heart attack Friday after completing a round of golf near Madrid, Spain, news stories reported the Tacoma-born entertainer's age as 73 - noting the birthdate as May 2, 1904. NBC in a television special, reported Crosby was 76. Magazine articles over the years have listed various dates, including 1901 and 1906.

Crosby attempted to put the record straight, stating in his autobiography that he was born May 30, 1904. Where he got it is anyone's guess. Maybe from the memories of relatives. Because when he tried to locate a copy of his birth certificate, he was unsuccessful.

'We were unable to find it', said Mrs. Vivian McNeill, chief deputy registrar of the Tacoma-Pierce County Health Department's Division of Vital Statistics. Why no-one thought to examine official Roman Catholic Church Records at St. Patrick Church, 1122 N. J. St., is a mystery. What was found in their records has got to be nearly as good as the word of God itself.

They indicate that Crosby was born in Tacoma on May 3, 1903 and baptized in the church on May 31, 1903. Thus, Crosby was 74 when he died.

THE HANDWRITTEN record in the now-weathered book shows the formalized Latin name for Harry, which was Bing's and his father's name. Bing's mother is listed by her maiden name. God-parents are listed. On the far left is a notation of Crosby's second marriage to Kathryn Grandstaff. The original entry was signed by The Rev. Anthony LeBlanc, parish priest in 1903.

Present parish priest, The Rev. Joseph Marquart said he did not know why there was no inclusion of Crosby's first marriage in 1930 to Wilma Wyatt, known professionally as Dixie Lee. "Sometimes that happens," said Father Marquart. "The parish where they were married is supposed to send us information. It didn't do it."

FATHER MARQUART said he is certain the birth and baptismal dates are accurate. 'Catholic Church records are accepted in court. We get enquiries for Social Security purposes all the time.'

Father Marquart also offered an explanation for what might have happened to cause confusion about Crosby's birthdate.

'For one out of five persons over 70 for whom we have funerals, the ages are incorrect,' Father Marquarter said. 'There were no records, families forgot when people were born. It happened. Maybe the Crosby family was one of those families that didn't celebrate birthdays.'

Thus the TACOMA NEWS TRIBUNE at the time of Bing's death.

Some of Ken's objectives have now been accomplished but with others there are delays and set-backs leaving much more ground to cover. By October 7th, 1977, the Senior Trust Officer and Manager, Tacoma branch of Seattle-First National Bank, Mr. Arleigh T. Jones, had established the Greater Tacoma Community Foundation which has offered to administer any funding for the project on a continuing basis. By November 26th, 1977, an option to purchase the birthplace had been sought but alas, the present owners, the Morry Abbott family, have lived there about 30 years and have no interest in selling their home as a "Crosby Museum". The Library Board required more concrete evidence before they would give any commitment.

Now Ken Twiss, through his Society, plans to obtain another building to house items relating to Bing Crosby; meanwhile there was the first display of Crosbyana in the Tacoma Public Library in November this year - sheet music, records, sleeves, signed photographs of Bing and other items, including one of Ken's proud possessions, a copy of THE BINGVILLE BUGLE, dated 1910! The contents of this (we have a photo-stat which is only just readable) are quite incredible for it is written in a gossippy, folksy style, with, to say the least, extremely quaint spelling. This was the paper, abounding in cartoons from which Bing got his name.

Another fascinating item unearthed was the TACOMA NEWS TRIBUTE feature, 'Looking Backward....' which under the sub-heading '75 years ago' said:

> "Harry L. Crosby has purchased two lots on the upper side of J. Street between North 11th and 12th Streets for 85 dollars. He will commence the erection of a 2,500 dollar residence there.
> December 14, 1902'

So that house, 1112 North J. Street could barely have been built when Bing was born there six months later!

The Crosby family moved by train to Spokane from Tacoma in July, 1906 when Bing had just turned three and abstracts from the Commonwealth Title Co in Tacoma show that the house was sold in 1906, the deed being dated April 6 and the house was sold to a Mr. Edward J. Walsh. And Ken Twiss has been able to authentically verify, by means of photo-copies of church records in Pierce County, Spokane and Olympia (state) the following vital statistics:

1895 - Laurence Earl (Larry) born Jan 3 at 616 N Street south, baptised 13 Jan 1895; died 1975 at 80. (Pierce Bureau)

1896 - Everett Nathaniel born April 5, at 110 North Yakima Ave. Baptised May 2, 1896, died July 13, 1966, at 70 - Baptismal record at St. Leo's Parish Church, Tacoma)

1900 - Henry Edward (Ted) born July 30, 1900 at 922 North I St. Baptised 12 August, 1900; died 1973, aged 73. Baptismal record St. Patrick Parish Church, Tacoma.

1903 - Harry Lillis (Bing) born May 3, 1903 at 1112 North J St Baptised 31 May 1903; died 14 October 1977 (Baptismal record at St. Patrick Church, Tacoma)

1904 - Catherine Cordelia born Oct 3 at 1112 North J. St. Birth registered 5 Nov 1904, Pierce County bureau of vital statistics)

1906 - Mary Rose born May 3, at 1214 South I St. Tacoma, birth registered 6 June 1906 - Pierce County bureau.

1913 - George Robert (Bob) born August 25 at 508 East Sharp St. Spokane, Wa. Baptiscd 7 Sept. 1913 at St. Aloysius Church, Spokane, Wa. Birth certificate with Bureau of vital statistics Olympia, Wa. also the baptismal register from St. Aloysius Parish Church in Spokane.

The father, Harry L, was 43 when the last child, Bob, was born, and he was, as a point of interest, the only one of the family born in Spokane and not Tacoma.

This gives some idea of the incredible manner in which Ken Twiss is going about his project. Already Ihave been in constant communication with him, giving the whole project my full support and putting forward various suggestions and proposals. One of these concerned the possibility of a taping library for public use as I was under the impression that copyright expired after 25 years. By an almost incredible coincidence the same month that I was pursuing this copyright subject with regard to this one aspect of the project, the American laws on copyright were being amended and overhauled with the result that there are now special provisions for tape libraries which may prove of inestimable benefit to the proposed Crosby memorial, proposed Crosby memorial.

And now things have really started to move; Department of State for Washington has now granted Articles of Incorporation for THE BING CROSBY HISTORICAL SOCIETY, a non-profit-making corporation (the Society has also received this status from the American revenue department) and under Article III, the PURPOSES of the Society are stated as:

> This corporation is organised for the following purposes:
>
> (1) To receive and maintain a fund or funds of real or personal property, or both, to use and apply the whole or any part of the income therefrom and the principal thereof exclusively to the promotion and encouragement of historical interest in musical artists of the Pacific Northwest and in particular to perpetuate the memory and spirit of Bing Crosby.

A very cordial letter from the Governor of Washington, a Proclamation by the Tacoma Council and various other documents are, it is hoped, reproduced in this issue of BING.

We cannot, at this juncture, quite comprehend what part THE INTERNATIONAL CROSBY CIRCLE can play in all this though our assistance has been sought. Naturally we will be more than ready to assist in what has been described as a "living memorial" to Bing and through myself (Colin Pugh) and the Editor we will keep in touch with Ken Twiss's progress.

A second building, in the current non-availability of Bing's birthplace, is being considered to house the museum, library and exhibition. This is an old theatre in Tacoma called the PANTAGES, already a historical landmark which will take on an altogether new significance if it is acquired. It must be conceded that there will probably be little opportunity for most of our members ever to visit it. But the very least we can do is to let our members know of this intriguing development in the States.

Editor: Thanks to Colin for introducing this enterprise; I am now in touch with Ken Twiss and have a tremendous amount of literature, far too much to reproduce here. The overhauling of the copyright laws in the States gives copyright to an author for his lifetime AND for 50 years after his death! But more pertinent is that the "criminal " aspect of taping radio programmes, and presumably gramophone records, has been removed and it is perfectly legal to do this PROVIDED it is for home pleasure only and not for profit.

One of the latest reports from the States is thatBing will be 'memorialised' by his alma mater Conzaga University. The Rev. Arthur Dussalt, a vice-president of the University said that plans call for a larger-than-lifesize bronze statue of Crosby to be placed in front of the Crosby Library on campus. Deborah Copenhaver, a Spokane sculptress, has been selected to do the work.

Despite Ken's incredibly generous donation of records to the Tacoma Library, ultimately to be contained in the new project, it seems that a large number of records will be required to make the collection complete for posterity. And one wonders how the "problem" of the LP will be surmounted.

It is certainly a matter for great encouragement that such activities are now proceeding in America, especially in view of the fact that over here in Britain the opinion was gaining ground that Bing was being forgotten and neglected in the very country where he should perhaps most of all be venerated.

BING - JAZZ SINGER BEYOND COMPARE

by JOHN W. BIGNELL +

The eternal fascination of the Crosby voice is the way in which it adapts to practically every type of singing. No one will dispute that throughout his long and unique career Bing remained the Master singer of ballads, hymns, cowboy songs, comedy numbers, Hawaiian, even a little opera. Thankfully no "punk-rock" - but then, I did say singing.

But throughout all the fifty and more years during which he remained the world's supreme singer and entertainer there was on abiding influence which stood him in such good stead and which was evident in hundreds of his songs. That was the unique training he received and the unforgettable lessons he learned whilst perfecting his technique during the years 1926-30 whilst with the Paul Whiteman musicians. Bing himself frequently reminded successive generations of admirers of the debt he owed to jazz immortals Venuti, Lang, the Dorsey Brothers, and above all Bix. I have not the slightest doubt that Bing's unique ability to phrase the most banal and repetitive song and to extract unsuspected and unexpected variations on the melody can all be traced back to his association with these jazz luminaries.

> In fact, if he had decided to remain a jazz singer pure and simple, linking his career with the Dorseys, Basie, Armstrong, Jimmy Lunceford, Ellington (above all Ellington) etc. etc., I cannot believe he would not now be regarded as the greatest-ever star in that particular and very specialised firmament. But to our enormous benefit Bing, of course, did not specialise. He branched out and with assistance and encouragement from Jack Kapp (I purposely put it no stronger than that) he became the most versatile singer the world is ever likely to know.

However, one puzzling fact irks me. Why is it that some members of the jazz fraternity persist in claiming that Bing was not a jazz singer? The hundreds of tributes paid to Bing after his sudden departure last year were spontaneous and sincere. Practically every programme on the media made reference to his passing - yet on only one did I hear a discordant note. This was on Humphrey Lyttleton's World of Jazz programme on BBC-2 Monday 17th October, 1977. Although Humphrey played a Bing record (AFTER YOU'VE GONE - 1946 with Eddie Condon) he prefaced it with the curious statement that in his opinion Bing was not really a jazz singer' because his style was too mannered' or words to that effect. Yet the same Mr. Lyttleton frequently refers to such singers as Jack Teagarden, Johnny Mercer, Jimmy Rushing as jazz singers with absolutely no reservations whatever.

If Bing was never a jazz singer how is it that he was the only singer able to record successfully with Bix Beiderbecke - and how was it that thirty years after that he was recording with Louis Armstrong an album that has been reissued countless times? And why did Count Basie like the idea of linking up with Bing in 1972 to make yet another superb album, tracks from which are frequently heard on various programmes today? What is this magic ingredient possessed by the gentleman mentioned above and which Bing lacked? It would be of immense interest if we could be informed of this.

Personally, I still believe that in the field of jazz singing Bing was as far ahead of all his contemporaries as he was of the ballad singers. When I listen to early superb examples like ONE MORE TIME and I'M GONNA GET YOU both recorded in 1931, or when I play the tremendous BING AND THE DIXIE-

LAND BANDS, BING WITH A BEAT with Bob Scobie (1957) and when I recall the show-stopping renditions of THEM THERE EYES and OL' MAN RIVER (not to mention NOW YOU HAS JAZZ) which nearly l..ted the roof of the Palladium every night for two weeks in 1976 and 1977, then I can only say - what more does a man have to achieve to become a fellow member of the Jack Teagarden/Johnny Mercer jazz-singing Appreciation Society? Do we have any jazz-orientated experts in our Circle who can enlighten me?

Editor: Far be it from me to class myself as a "jazz" expert - at the same time, I am NOT inexpert! And you'll notice I put "jazz" in inverted commas, as I always feel I should. It is an ephemereal thing: no two "jazz experts" will give the same answer. Fifty will give fifty different answers. But while I understand John's feeling of irksomeness, it helps if you regard "jazz" experts as figures of amusement - as I learned as far back as 1934 when all the experts caned Louis Armstrong for playing a "popular" programme on his first visit to the Palladium. And they "expelled" Nat King Cole in total disgrace because he forsook jazz-piano to be a very popular 'commercial' singer! Firstly, a "jazz" man, or jazz singer, must NEVER make anything with popular appeal. It must be something that appeals only to that esoteric circle of "jazz" appreciators - but remember, none of them really knows what "jazz" is. Its comparable to saying "wood" is, but "timber" isn't; lemonade is, but orangeade isn't - the differences are not only finer than that - they're nonsense. And a jazz singer must not, on any account, have a voice that is easy on the ear. That would be unforgivable. Louis Armstrong only brought sneers from the "jazz experts" with WHAT A WONDERFUL WORLD and the other commercial things he was caddish enough to do! Forgive me, but John did ask! And, of course, we'll welcome other views on Bing as a "jazz" singer....

THAT ACE MAN OF REVELATIONS has been in the States and one of the things he did was to interview Rudy Vallee and his story appeared in THE OBSERVER colour supplem.. under the heading of "LAST OF THE CROONERS" - by Charles Thompson, to him and THE OBSERVER our grateful acknowledgements for the following quotes:

THE OBSERVER COLOUR MAGAZINE 24 SEPT 1978

'Bitterness oozes from Rudy. For the past 20 years his career has been almost non-existent. While Crosby soared to the greatest heights, his own style of music became obsolete. He hates the Beatles, refuses to talk about Presley... 'They've just destroyed all the beauty that was in the beautiful dance bands and the popular song as we knew it....they've taken us right back to the ..... jungle,' explodes Rudy. But Vallee does not believe he would have reached the heights attained by Bing. He didn't have the Crosby voice - nor does he feel there was any real rivalry between himself and The Groaner. 'No! No! Rivalry's when you think you've got something that competes with the other guy,' reasons Rudy. 'My voice was so bad...compared to his...I existed only because I had the personality of a director of music. I was the first orchestra leader ever to be the host of a radio show. But I never sold any records; compared with the records he sold.

Thompson then reverted to what he said in his book - Crosby and Vallee were never very close. Rudy found the Old Groaner aloof and insisted that all the Crosby's had iced-water in their veins. He believes this showed in Bing's singing: 'Bing had no feeling, no sex, in his voice. For all the beauty in his voice he had a sexless voice. But they said I was the singer with a .... in his voice', he proclaims.

Ah well, Bing with no feeling! I hope the ladies and the others with tender susceptibilities will overlook the "dots" in this extract but we have quoted THE OBSERVER exactly. For myself, I always recall the remark attributed to Rudy Vallee: "I was walking down Broadway and heard this Crosby voice booming out MILLION DOLLAR BABY - and I knew my days as No. 1 were over...."

LES GREETS ALL HIS BING FRIENDS GAYLORD

+ + + + + + + + + + + + + + + + +

Christmas is virtually upon us once again - and dare we say that the festive season seems to come around so quickly these days without running the risk of being labelled "getting too old"! Nevertheless, it is my knowledge that the Christmas edition of BING is looked upon as a particular part of the forthcoming holiday so here goes with my contribution.

My revelation in the last issue that there is to be a Volume 3 of A BING CROSBY COLLECTION on the CBS Embassy label certainly sparked off some great interest. Unfortunately, while thanking all those who have written to me about this I am not in a position to report any progress. But I have heard that the sales of Vols 1 and 2 have been most encouraging and no doubt it is this fact that has prompted thoughts of the third volume. It is certainly encouraging news that these albums, right from the grass-roots of Bing's career, are selling well. No doubt Michael Brooks told me of his plans when they were just being formulated.

> There are certainly some good "classic" tracks proposed for this further issue, several that were made in 1933-34 - around the time that Bing once said he thought his voice was at its best. And I certainly go along with Bing on that. They were certainly my favourite years - tho' I'm aware that not everyone will agree with me.

I hope I'm not being obscure; for me Bing was great all through his wonderful career and I share the general view of scores of people in all walks of life who wrote to say that he was still the "tops" - from the start right to the very end. Even so, one is permitted to choose a favourite favourite period!

The new United Artists album THE GOLDEN AGE OF AMERICAN RADIO has me enthalled, especially with its beautiful cover. As for the musical content I'm thoroughly pleased with it and the editing is quite superb. And it conveys to me that in the main when Bing was at Decca he did the best songs on radio - again, just a personal opinion.

I note that Alan Warner produced this album; I had the pleasure of meeting Alan many times during Bing's association with United Artists and I am writing to him to see if we can have further recordings from Bing's radio programmes. There are many superb renderings of songs such as A KISS TO BUILD A DREAM ON, MY FOOLISH HEART, BECAUSE OF YOU, ON THE MORNING SIDE OF THE MOUNTAIN, TENNESSEE WALTZ, SO TIRED, I LOVE YOU FOR SENTIMENTAL REASONS, RUMOURS ARE FLYING, A TREE IN THE MEADOW, A DREAMER'S HOLIDAY and so many more. I'm sure Alan will be sympathetic since he specialises in releasing older material.

'Way back in the summer of 1974 when I found myself getting together with Ken Barnes concerning Bing's work here I brought to Ken's notice the fact that in the 50's Bing made a large number of recordings for CBS radio which were used in Bing's radio programmes that he shared with Rosemary Clooney. The Buddy Cole tracks no less you have been reading about earlier in this issue - which, also, seem to be causing a bit of controversy! I told Ken that Bing's admirers the world over were keenly interested in getting hold of these tracks or at least, some of them. Ken promised to see what could be done; he has certainly honoured that promise, and in a recent message he told me that things were beginning to hum again on the Crosby front. Concerning the Cole

tracks, for which Ken has secured a deal, this information is for the Crosby world only. That's you amd me! A partner in this deal is none other than Chris Harding, formerly of Polydor Records who worked with Ken on the SEASONS album. As I write, their plans are to start recording and "sound restoration" around the end of November. These plans include the novel idea for new arrangements in stereo to be added to support Bing's voice. Ken and Chris have formed their own production company to mount these tracks and they have, initially, leased no less than 72 of the recordings for a start and the first release is planned for this spring. Wonderful news indeed - and I would emphasise to those critical of the project to - as Reg has said - at least wait and see! Like Mr. Disraeli - or was it Mr. Gladstone? Furthermore, in unison with these first releases it is planned to issue also the poetry readings that Bing did at the conclusion of the final SEASONS session at the behest of Noel Mould.

I note that younger members have already been filled in as to the history and origin of the "mysterious" Buddy Cole tracks. And I must admit that I too have received many letters ever since the "sound restoration" idea was first mooted to the effect that the Buddy-Cole-directed trio and orchestra was very popular, the recording balance was good - meaning there was plenty of "voice", and why not issue them as they are? Many fear that with stereo accompaniment much of the voice may be lost in favour of the accompaniments and arrangements. To this end I have specially requested Ken, to please US, to make sure there IS plenty of Bing voice when the editing and balancing is done. I'm sure Ken is sympathetic to this feeling and the wishes of so many collectors and fans.

> And there are, on the other hand, many reasons for Ken Barnes embarking on the project in the way he has announced. He insists that if a good sale is to be ensured these days it is essential to show the customer (that's the GENERAL public) that the recordings do, in fact, have stereo treatment. Its fashionable. We must understand that if the Cole recordings are left in their original state it is likely a commercial outlet never would materialise.

We will have another issue of BING - perhaps two - by the time the records are ready for the shops and there will be time for us to assist in the mounting of these records - together with Ken Barne's book, of which also you have already read. I have seen a preliminary "blurb" of the book which reads:

> "The Crosby Years is not just a biography. It is the first thoroughly documented examination of the long life and work of the late Bing Crosby whose easy and familiar style and great popularity spanned several generations.
>
> This book written by Ken Barnes, who produced many albums with Crosby and who worked with him right up to the time of his death in 1977, is packed with details and information covering the whole of Crosby's working career.
>
> There is a comprehensive biography of the man himself, full of anecdote and incident from both friends and critics, and also detailed analysis of Crosby's vocal innovation over the years 1926-77.
>
> This relates both the successes and failures, the trial and error through which Crosby arrived at his own individual style and an understanding of the uses and limitations of his voice.
>
> Year by year, sometimes session by session, the author traces Crosby's stylistic progression, pointing out not only the best of Bing, but also to the worst and offering detailed critical assessment of over 150 recordings.
>
> The Crosby filmography and discography which follow give a

complete listing of both the major Crosby films and his appearances in others and the most comprehensive listing ever of Crosby's enormous commercial record output, information derived in part from private collections in the UK, USA and Australia.

This section includes information on titles, composers, arrangements and recording dates which should be of tremendous interest to Crosby enthusiasts everywhere.

The final section carries a selection of lyrics and music for some of the many songs which Bing Crosby made popular.

This book may be called a souvenir, covering as it does in immense and authoritative details, every aspect of the recordings and film career of one of the world's best-loved entertainers.

The author, Ken Barnes, is described as a record producer and has worked on the last six Crosby albums and that he lives in London (Essex to be precise)."

Under SELLING POINTS, it is stated there is tremendous fan following for Crosby. Also possible tie-in with new albums of, as yet, unrecorded (unreleased) Crosby songs.

Relating to these proposed album(s) I have been requested to submit a listing of 60 songs by Bing never before released. I am also submitting a listing of 60 songs from the American Decca catalogue of my own proposals for songs that never seem to get released on LP records. Only time will tell if any recordings WILL be released to tie-in with Ken's book, but I thought you might like to hear of Mr. [illegible]kard's request to me regarding unreleased material.

It certainly seems as if 1979 is going to be an exciting year for things Crosby...the spirit of the greatest of them all lives on.

> And at this time of the dying year I would like to send my warmest thanks to the many people who have sent me literally thousands of letter over this year and for the encouragement and support they afforded me. And, alas, I must send my apologies to so many who have written me but are awaiting replies. I have been extremely busy on house improvements - badly needed! - as well as several important projects with my employment. I hope all will understand.

I was very pleased indeed that Kathryn Crosby sent me one of Bing's black bow-ties, a pin-striped tie, and also a pair of Bing's spectacles as mementoes of the great man.

I'm sure I need hardly add that I fully agree the views of so many of you who wrote condemning the three contemptible articles about Bing written by Charles Thompson which appeared in THE DAILY MIRROR and other papers. I wrote to the paper stating that I could have painted an entirely different picture of Bing Crosby entirely free of charge. For me, Mr. Thompson's articles were "gash-hand" journalism. At the final SEASONS album sessions I recall that Mr. Thompson turned up - and to me it was noticeable that Bing "eyed him up".

On October 29 last I travelled to Portsmouth with some local members to att..

end a meeting of members of Phil Clarke's flourishing SOUTHERN BING CROSBY TRIBUTE CLUB - and thereby met not only Phil again but some very charming members including the redoubtable Ena Hooley and some younger ladies in - would you believe - BING T-shirts. And we were treated to a wonderful evening of Bing on video-tapes - and at long last I saw the Oslo TV show that Bing gave there in the open-air when he went to Norway at the end of August 1977. Bing was in fine form on the alfresco platform and very amusing, too, at times. This show was, of courwe, made the vehicle for the Joe Bushkin album.

> Phil thro' the medium of TV video has amassed some great material associated with Bing, probably the best collection in Britain. His enterprise has mad him a very enviable man. And into the bargain his wife and daughter certainly contributed to make it a great evening for us.

These meetings are held monthly for the interest of the Southern people and Phil can be contacted at the address given elsewhere or on the telephone at 67457.

> And finally, I had the good fortune to meet Michael Parkinson the "chat-show" BBC man in the late summer when he appeared at a theatre here on the Isle of Wight. We had a drink together both before and after his show - which was excellent - and he tied me in when telling the audience of Bing's two appearances on his TV programme. He also told the audience that Bing "was a lovely man".

My warmest best wishes to all members for a happy Christmas - and a great 1979. The promise looks good - and whatever the media does or does not serve up for us, I know you will have a Bing-Christmas too.

A MORE UNUSUAL TRIBUTE TO BING: FROM "THE DAILY MIRROR" 14 NOV.1977

At seven o'clock on a wet Sunday night twenty-two of London's top session musicians assemble in Studio 3 at Maida Vale. For three hours it belongs to Peter Boizot, restaurateur and jazz fan. He is plunging into the record business. He plans to record songs Bing Crosby made famous, using a string orchestra to back the great American cornet-player Ruby Braff.

Boizot is nervous - he is not a poor man, but this project is the most costly he has undertaken for the love of music. He knows that Braff is an exacting man. But after Braff and the orchestra have played 16 bars he bursts into the control-room and shouts: 'It sounds terrific! Its marvellous!' Braff and arranger Neil Richardson grin broadly. The next worry is whether a sixth number - the all-important WHITE CHRISTMAS which Boizot wants to release as a single - will be recorded before time runs out. With seconds to go, the performance ends.

Braff poses for photographs in a Crosby-style hat and pipe. And one of the hard-bitten session men who record everything from the classics to punk rock, says: "I wish we could play music like this every day."

(With acknowledgements to DAILY MIRROR & DAVID BRADBURY)

Editor: Sounds an interesting project and we will look forward to the sound of this music.

A PLACE IN ESSEX: by BERT BISHOP

> We were quite unprepared for the very warm reception that was afforded A PLACE IN GWENT in the last issue. People seemed to like it so much we are going to extend it - an ICC georgraphy lesson if you like! This contribution is, therefore, the second and should anyone feel like following up in this series they are cordially invited to do so. Keep it to about a page in length: Editor

MAYLAND, par. and vil., Essex. 6½m. SE of Maldon; 1875 ac.,pop 343; eccl. dist., 354; P.O.

Thus runs the entry in an elderly Gazeteer for that neck of the woods where I have been domiciled for 20 years come Christmas Eve. Having had a weekend caravan on the same plot and, by way of family, owned the land since the latter days of the War - when it was part of a wheatfield - I am fairly well acquainted with local history and geography.

About a 100 years ago a wealthy philanthropist stood atop the hill where Mayland's St. Barnabas church looks out across the River Blackwater as it sweeps some 15 miles inland from its North Sea estuary to the, still coastal ancient Essex town of Maldon, and he said that it reminded him of looking over Jordan - a land of fruitful promise. Shortly thereafter he settled a number of London families on 5-acre boldings down by the riverside, in a collectivist agricultural venture. For business rather than agricultural reasons the scheme was a failure, but the fruitful land and holdings remain, and I am fortunate enough to own one of them. It runs down to Pigeon Creek, a tributary of the Blackwater, and here the Creek opens out into a small mud basin where less than 50 years ago horse-drawn and sailing barges put in to unload tons of stones to make up surrounding farm roads and to depart laden to the gunwakes with local grown grain.

The wild saltings and zostera grasslands that lay beyond the meandering sea walls are riddled with creeks with nakes like Lawling, Steeple, Goldhanger, Thistly and Mundon. Up river is Collier's Reach where in the 9th century the Danish invaders anchored their boats to fight the great Saxon, Brithnoth in the bloody battle of Maldon. Down river, behind Osea Island, is The Stumble where in earlier centuries Viking long-boats came to grief on the treacherous mud-bank.

By the Othona Roman Fort there still stands one of England's oldest churches - St. Peter's Juxta-Mare, built in the 6th century it echoes memories of the last of the Roman invaders, standing as it does on the sea wall at the end of a Roman road.

Little more than a couple of miles down river from where I live are the ruins of Stansgate Abbey and Priory - inevitably haunted! Close by is Stansgate Farm, the home of the erstwhile Lord Stansgate, now Cabinet Minister Wedgewood Benn.

As the river and creeks have ebbed and flowed down thro' history the constant erosion of the land has enlarged this vast haunt of wildfowl, and the winter months still see invasions - by brent geese, teal, wigeon, pintail and mallard. Consequently the creeks were a place of longshoremen and punt-gunners. Weatherbeaten men of whom only a handful remain. But the fowl are still here, having also survived the fairly near menace of the projected 'Third Airport' off Foulness marshes.

The surrounding countryside of the Dengie Hundred comprises a half dozen villages linked by comparatively small farms. None more than 200 acres. Four miles to the south, over the hill and lying on the river Crouch is the well known yachting centre of Burnham from where sails another parliamentarian -

Edward Heath. As in other suitable coastal areas the week-end yachtsman is beginning to take over, and the less graceful power boats with skiers in tow have almost seen off the commercial sailing barges that loaded timber from Scandinavian ships stood off in the estuary and carried it to the ramps of the giant saw-mills at Maldon.

With the week-enders came the developers, and Mayland's population increased from that original agricultural venture that grew along the river to become Mayland sea. A new part of the village that with the older parts of the parish numbers 2000 residents. Many of these are young folk with their first homes. A few shops, a couple of pubs and a church Family Centre have come with them. But for many years we lived here without the benefit of mains services, having to rely on oil lamps and distant stand-pipes for water. We still have no proper roads though they are slated for the early 'Eighties.

Thus it is a place of change and variety, the new slowly pushing out the old as it always has, I suppose. But a half-mile from home the fields and trees open out to the rural life-which has always been my own way of life - and will remain so as long as I can pull on a pair of gumboots.

ON THE PAGE OPPOSITE IS A REPRODUCTION OF THE RESOLUTION PASSED BY THE PIERCE COUNTY COMMISSIONERS HONORING THE MEMORY OF BING CROSBY as described in the story by Colin Pugh of the society formed in America by Mr. Ken Twiss to create a "living" memory to Bing. The wording is sure to interest our members.

Following that, overleaf, are two highly interesting Crosby "relics". As can be seen, we are delighted to be able to show you how the local newspaper in Tacoma (Bing's birthplace) appeared. Only the heading, to be sure. You must imagine this heading of the BINGVILLE BUGLE is a sere, faded document and its a minor miracle that it has reproduced. You will also note that it is a copy of that paper dated October 10, 1910. In other words, this could be one of the copies that Bing used to read when he was seven and probably dubbed "Bing" on account of his interest in its cartoon features. We say Bing "used to read" but no doubt like most 7-year-olds, he would just have followed the cartoon strips! But this is a tremendous Crosby relic which also should prove fascinating to Bing fans. It came to us via Ken Twiss.

On the same page is a facsimile of Bing's baptismal certificate - NOT his birth certificate - as discovered in St. Patricks Church, Tacoma. This confirms the 1903 date and to be fair, our member Fred Reynolds was able to confirm the veracity of this date a year ago. The handwriting, in fact all of the form, is in Latin but shows that Bing's birth was "registered" on 31st May with his birth-date 3rd May. The names of Bing's parents can be seen, and a note added concerning Bing's second marriage - the first, according to the present priest at St. Patricks, was not notified to that church in Tacoma as it should have been. We regret these highly interesting documents cannot be reproduced more clearly.

The remaining item is, as can be seen, a comment from the USA "The Sun" of October 15 last year - a most tasteful and dignified statement it is, too.

Opposite THAT page is another highly dignified review of the TV tribute to Bing by Richard Afton. The same page contains an item from the London EVENING NEWS concerning a plaque for Bing at the London Palladium - and the fatuous comment from the general manager of Moss Empires: "...it may lead to fans of every star who ever appeared (at the Palladium) making similar requests." How can such a man, in such a position, be so out of touch? The very stars and fans he mentions were the first to queue up to pay tribute to Bing as the greatest. I wrote to the EVENING NEWS on seeing this, reiterating my firm belief that in installing a plaque to commemorate Bing's

(Cont. on page 33)

FILE NO. 159

RESOLUTION NO. 21065

RESOLUTION OF THE BOARD OF PIERCE COUNTY COMMISSIONERS HONORING THE MEMORY OF BING CROSBY.

WHEREAS, on the first anniversary of the death of Bing Crosby, beloved native son of Pierce County, the Board of Pierce County Commissioners wishes to join the "Bing Crosby Historical Society" in fond remembrance during their commemoration; and

WHEREAS, twenty-eight years ago, the founder of said Society donated a collection of 700 Bing Crosby records to the Tacoma Public Library where the Fine Arts Department became the repository, indicating that his home area has long appreciated the man who made singing history on records, radio and films; and

WHEREAS, the Board supports the efforts of the Society to establish a living memorial to the local man whose name is found in Who's Who, encyclopedias, music histories and record and sports catalogs; Now, therefore,

BE IT RESOLVED BY THE BOARD OF PIERCE COUNTY COMMISSIONERS:

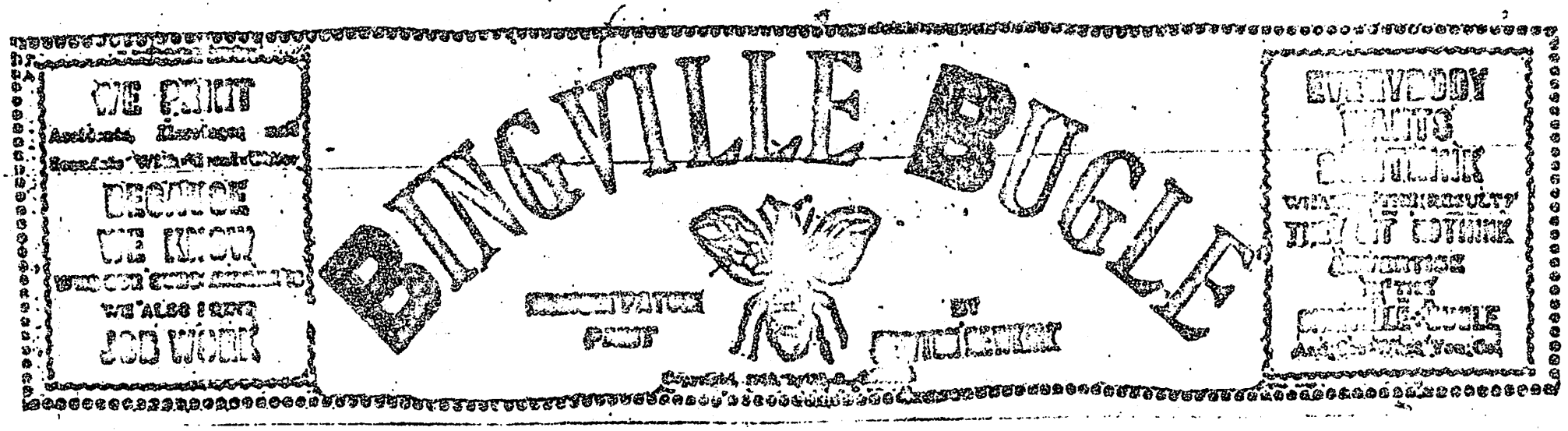
Section 1. On behalf of the citizens of Pierce County numbered among millions of fans throughout the world who admire this exemplary performer, the Board wishes success to the "Bing Crosby Historical Society" in perpetuation of Crosbyana and promotion and encouragement of highest artistic achievement.

PASSED and APPROVED this 10TH day of OCTOBER, 1978.

Chairman.

Board of Pierce County Commissioners

Daily & Sunday - Spokane, Wa. "Spokesman Review" Sunday Oct 10, 1976 - last Pge



A-2 Tacoma, Sun., Oct. 16, 1977 The News Tribune

16

Registrum Baptizatorum Ecclesiae

Dioecesis

NOMEN.

Crosby

Die 3 1ª mensis Maii A. D. 1903

baptizavi Ferdinandum Celia

natus die 3ª mensis Maii A. D. 1903 ex

Henricus L. Crosby & Catharina Harrigan

Patrini fuerunt Franciscus Harrigan & Eliz. Crosby

Adnotationes:

Ord. LaSalle

Copy of Bing's baptismal certificate

Bing Crosby

(The Sun (USA) obituary)

He was not the most talented singer in history, but he was the most popular. He never would have made it before the advent of the microphone, but he did have talent and could carry a tune. His greatest talent was affability. He maintained it through bad times and good, revolutions in taste and value, over four decades. Others came into fashion; he never went out. Bing Crosby brought good cheer to millions of all ages in all countries, and harm to none. A warm spot for him united many who were otherwise culturally incompatible. Thanks to technology, the Crosby presence will never die; and the early Crosby will never age. The man died at 73, the way he must have wanted to go, with his golf shoes on.

RICHARD

AFTON

The perfect way to say goodbye

I AM not sure of the reaction of younger viewers to Bing Crosby, His Life and Legend, shown by London Weekend on Friday night.

But to older viewers, it was a nostalgic star-studded experience. Seldom has such a galaxy of famous names appeared in one TV show.

Sadly, so many of them are no longer with us.

The programme revealed some remarkable facets of Bing's character, such as his shyness and his embarrassment at mentioning the word love, or showing affection.

Unusual for a film star, he was almost paranoic in his craving for privacy in his home life. He rarely invited even his intimate friends to his house, maybe once in ten years. But this in no way diminished his popularity.

I have a personal sadness over his death.

I had always been an admirer of his, but I never saw him in person, and when he came to the Palladium last year, I did not go because he was to star in the Royal Variety Show on November 21. Being connected with this show, I preferred to meet him on more intimate terms at rehearsals.

Tragically, he died a few weeks before the show, and I never met one of the world's most-popular and best-loved performers.

Bing epitomised pop singing at its highest quality and made today's pop stars sound like the raucous illiterates most of them are.

The wheel must turn full circle; Bing's melodious singing style will return to lift pop singing from the pit into which it has sunk.

This show was an informative and moving tribute to a great artist.

BING CROSBY
Strange shyness

A plaque for Bing? It's a problem

FANS of Bing Crosby want a permanent reminder to the star placed at the London Palladium.

They want the owners to erect a plaque commemorating Bing's services to show-business.

But the campaign by the International Crosby Circle face a major obstacle.

For Bing only played two seasons at London's top variety theatre and the owners fear fans of every star who appeared will want similar plaques put up.

Only one star has had a plaque at the theatre—Judy Garland.

But she was a well-known Palladium celebrity who made some of her memorable performances there.

Ronnie Swift, general manager of Moss Enterprises, which owns the Palladium said: "We would like to see Mr. Crosby remembered but it may lead to fans of every star who ever appeared making similar requests.

"It is very much the case of where do you draw the line?"

Debut

Bing made his debut at the Palladium with sell-out concerts in 1976. A year later he was back but died shortly after a two-week engagement on October 14.

His last concert at Brighton is remembered with a plaque.

Mr. Lloyd Harrington, deputy leader of the Labour opposition on the GLC and a friend of Bing's widow, supports the idea.

"I can't think there would be any planning problems and it would be a nice gesture for someone who gave pleasure to so many people," he said.

Der Bingel lives — just listen to Harris

By DEBORAH CIPOLLA
Associated Press

LOS ANGELES — Listen to the mellow, fluid voice of Jack Harris, and you could become a believer in reincarnation.

Harris, a former singer on WJR in Detroit and entertainer in his own right, doesn't bear any physical resemblance to the late Bing Crosby, but close your eyes and listen to him talk or sing in that smooth baritone voice, and you'll swear Der Bingel has come back to life.

The uncanny vocal likeness — which Harris insists is unintentional and definitely not an imitation of the late singer — used to bring Harris nothing but good luck. "It seems that only good things have happened to me because of it," he told a reporter more than 20 years ago.

Harris, who admits only to being "over 30," worked for 16 years as a successful radio and television disc jockey and talk show host in Detroit — with the likes of Sammy Davis Jr., Milton Berle and Liberace, and even Bing's son Phil, appearing as guests. After the death of his wife, Harris decided to make the big move to California, "to find my fame and fortune."

BUT IN 1975, Harris recorded a radio commercial for the Mark C. Bloome tire company, and after pressure from Crosby's attorneys, Bloome stopped running the ads and dropped Harris.

"They (Bloome) were threatened with a lawsuit, so they left the decision up to me," Harris recalled recently.

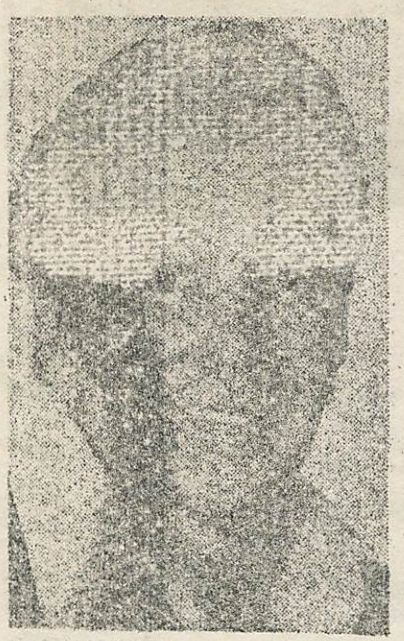
So Harris sued Crosby and asked for $2 million in damages. "I didn't want to, but I had no alternative," he says.

His life for nearly three years consisted of court battles, mostly delays. Since work was impossible for him to find, he had a lot of spare time on his hands.

Despairing, he wrote a letter to the CBS news magazine television show "60 Minutes," describing his situation. He says it was the best move he ever made.

Mike Wallace, who co-hosts the show, interviewed Harris, then flew to London to interview Crosby who, Harris says, didn't appear to know that much about the lawsuit.

AT WALLACE'S suggestion, Crosby even offered to sing a duet on the show with Harris, and a date was scheduled.



JACK HARRIS

But Bing died just six days after the Wallace interview, after suffering a heart attack on a golf course in Spain in October, 1977.

The "60 Minutes" segment was aired anyway, the weekend after Crosby's death. And since then, Harris' life seems to be on the upswing.

The $2 million lawsuit against Crosby was settled in early August for an undisclosed amount, and Harris was free to resume his singing career.

Bing's widow, Kathryn, wrote to Harris months earlier, "... Bing had no desire to harm you in your professional career and, had he lived, surely would have been more than happy to do what he could to alleviate any difficulty you may have had in securing employment in the industry..."

IMMEDIATELY following the "60 Minutes" airing, Harris received several offers to do Crosby tributes, but "out of respect, I decided to wait until now. I took a rain check on them."

One offer he accepted immediately was to play the lead in a movie called, "The Crooner," which, it is quickly pointed out, is in no way related to Crosby.

Harris also is looking forward to appearing in a "Tribute to Bing" segment of the Folies Bergere at the Tropicana Hotel in Las Vegas.

appearances at the London Palladium surely it is the Palladium that would be honoured. They had assuredly got things the wrong way round. But, such is the glorious freedom of the press, the letter wasn't printed. True, we are Crosby-biassed but that doesn't alter the basic facts that Bing has been widely acclaimed as the entertainer in so many fields - of the century that the management of the Palladium should be falling over itself to commemorate the honour Bing did to that theatre. And not forgetting that one half of his appearances there resulted in enormous sums being devoted to British charities. It is just to mention at this juncture that many of our members have been very diligent in this matter: Mrs. Rene Chester, of Hanwell, London, and Trevor Wagstaff of Hornchurch in particular - the latter enlisting the aid of Mr. Illtyd Harrington, Deputy Leader of the Opposition in the Greater London Council and a man Bing befriended in the last three years. It really does seem ridiculous that the Palladium management are so dilly-dallying over making such a gesture that would please so many people and certainly offend none.

Finally to the odd story opposite concerning Jack Harris. We have heard odd mentions of this business over the past year or two but have refrained from mentioning it because we just did not know the full story. Now, thanks to Stateside member Morton B. Miller, we can present what appears to be the complete story. And an unusual one it is, too, even tho' we might blanch at the title!

From Dick Todd to Michael Holliday with goodness knows how many in between there is now Jack Harris. If the writer of this story from THE DETROIT NEWS is to be relied upon Mr. Harris must bear an uncanny resemblance to Bing both in his singing and speaking voices. As noted, we had heard of a commercial being used on American TV where the voice sounded very much like Bing, but did not show him OR name him, thus leaving people to assume that it WAS Bing. A not unknown trick in advertising on the medium. But when the ruse gets too blatant its not unnatural that the imitated artist feels he must do something about it. Although according to this story it is not imitation, just a natural coincidence.

It is very easy to accept Kathryn's view that Bing had no desire to harm Harris in his career and it does seem that the affair has ended satisfacorily, accelerated no doubt by Bing's passing. That Bing offered to sing a duet with his gentleman on TV is confirmation of Bing's desire to help the man, rather than harm him.

But Der Bingel (odd spelling!) Lives! Well he does, but not perhaps in the way this reporter means. We feel it is of sufficient interest to members, however, to include the intriguing story.

Sorry the picture isn't sufficient to show what Jack Harris looks like - the photograph in the newspaper was very "foggy" to start with. But he LOOKS nothing like Bing in any case.

One of our readers, who shall be nameless (!) wrote to the Poet Laureate, no less - she had a charming little reply to the effect that he was very sorry he was unable to help. Now, I cannot remember whether the lady asked Sir John Betjeman for a poem on Bing's passing, or his help in getting a British honours award for him.

But it was enterprising!

BING ON THE BOX

ITV'S PRESENTATION

BING CROSBY HIS LIFE AND LEGEND

reviewed by
BERT BISHOP + + + +

When, at 11.10pm on the evening of Friday, 13th October the voice of Bing sang out from the television loudspeakers with, surprisingly, STRIKE UP THE BAND, it at once became a moment of elevating relief to realise, or confirm, what we had been already aware of - that, as once poetically described, being as 'perennial as spring', Bing Crosby was as much among us and with us from beyond the Vale as he had been during the fifty talented years of his allotted life-span.

That confirmation of the ever-present Bing was a sustaining thought to carry us through the midnight hour to the otherwise painful anniversary of the death of a much loved and admired man who, by self-effacing description, was just 'one of the fellas'.

First shewn in the USA on ABC-TV, 9 - 11 pm 25th May 1978, the pattern and presentation of this special tribute followed familiar lines, though the content departed from the predictable both by production difficulties and design.

In the former instance Universal Pictures would not permit the inclusion of any of t eir copyright material. This meant that excerpts from all pre-1948 Paramount films (Bing's major screen company) and KING OF JAZZ could not be included. The only pre-'48 Paramount film of Bing's that is not owned by Universal is ROAD TO RIO which, along with BALI and HONG KONG, made up a trio of 'Road' pictures that were featured and which are less representative of the series than ZANZIBAR, MOROCCO and UTOPIA.

Similarly, MGM were not forthcoming with HIGH SOCIETY, though with the musical sequences WE'LL MAKE HAY WHILE THE SUN SHINES and the title tune, they co-operated with their 1933 GOING HOLLYWOOD.

Notable absentees among the personalities invited to talk about Bing, and their relationship with him, were his close friend Phil Harris, friendly rival Frank Sinatra and the lady of the sarong, Dorothy Lamour. Phil and Frank declined by saying that their feelings were too personal to convey in a show; and Dottie Lamour, having just lost her husband, was too grieved to appear.

However, there were inspired inclusions, and the many available alternatives were more than compensation as were the several departures from the obvious.

BING'S 'BEGONE DULL CARE'

William Holden, friend and male co-star of COUNTRY GIRL, narrated the programme and began with the words: "His was the voice heard by more people than that of any other human being who ever lived." What followed amply illustrated that quantity was the least important, or even interesting, aspect of Bing's colourful career.

Yet again the programme showed that Bing's greatest characteristic, his begone-dull-care amiability permeated every depart of his public life, and was the common denominator that linked Crosby the singer-actor-radio and TV entertainer-sportsman. Although its a personal statement it made me more than ever aware that however pleasurably unique Bing's singing voice and style, it was his natural easy-going charm that endeared him to the world and accounted for his unrivalled success.

Whilst known to followers of the Crosby career the general viewing public were, by several narrated examples, made aware of the fairly normal ups and downs of family life that Bing kept as private as his status would allow. His degree of shyness and reticence with physical demonstration were also brought to the fore: "(he) couldn't bear to do the love scenes and would put off the kissing scenes until the last day.", said Mary Martin. "If I say I love you' was the significant example that Jimmy Van Heusen wrote into the song, MOONLIGHT BECOMES YOU.

Gary Crosby, Bing's eldest son, spoke of his father's tough attitude to his first family, and a rare film test clip did, in fact, show Gary letting himself in for a taste of the heavy hand for not practicising on the clarinet.

Also in rare vein was the footage of film that showed Bing at home with both of his families. Playing baseball with his four sons and, some twenty years later, being entertained by nursery rhyme recitals from his only daughter. This was NOT publicity material, but it certainly helped to put some recent public 'relevations' into context and perspective.

Still on the subject of rare film, what a delight to see the screen test footage of Bing heavily disguised by make-up and voice characterisation in the role of Will Rogers - a biopic that was never made, after all.

REMARKABLE FORERUNNER:

Throughout the extensively illustrated life story there emerged many highlights of varying interest and delight. Of course, seeing Bing and hearing him sing JUST ONCE MORE CHANCE from the Mack Sennett 'short' must have been a particular highlight for many members - it moved me greatly - but what I found very interesting was the comparison that William Holden drew in Bing's relationship with Arthur Stone in a Mack Sennett film with the much later Crosby-Hope partnership. This early repartee proved a remarkable forerunner to the later association.

So far so good, we had had the effervescent WHEN THE FOLKS HIGH UP DO THE MEAN LOWDOWN from REACHING FOR THE MOON; the appealing SO DO I from PENNIES FROM HEAVEN, and that lovely ballad WITH EVERY BREATH I TAKE from HERE IS MY HEART. Now, suddenly, there was a gap; from hereon practically all of Bing's films were with Paramount....how would the producers handle it?

By a stroke of minor genius the producers slotted in a fascinating sequence that had Bing singing his famous film songs over pictures of illustrated song-sheets of the period. Sandwiched between his early films and later screen performances it was barely apparent that such a relevant era had been almost glossed over. Many of the song sheets must have come quite fresh to many viewers anyway.

Bing's filmic career was adequately rounded-off by the inclusion of HERE COMES THE GROOM, HIGH TIME, LITTLE BOY LOST, ANYTHING GOES, COUNTRY GIRL, and a nice nod to Father O'Malley by way of BELLS OF ST. MARY'S; and now there was Bing's voice heard singing:

> "When the blue of the night meets the gold of the day..." and by that significant word change from 'Where' to 'When' it was apparent that we were in to radio. It was a time, not a place. Time when one turned in to hear Bing on the Kraft Music Hall, Philco Radio Time, and all the series of commercial presentations that were to follow.

By informal studio shots Bing was seen and heard with Fred Allen, Groucho Marx, Jack Benny, Al Jolson and Judy Garland. A top billing selection of the many hundreds of stars and top-flight entertainers that guested on

Bing's almost continuously running radio programmes. We heard from producer Carol Carroll, announcer Ken Carpenter (faithful servant he) and again Mary Martin. We learned how the shows were recorded and hung together so that on stage only Bing knew what was coming next. It introduced an ad lib spontaneity that was the hallmark of Bing in all he did.

Now the war; often-seen clips, here. Bing, Hope and Sinatra clowning around with MAIRZY DOATS; Bing at the Stage-Door Canteen crooning AMOR, AMOR, entertaining troops at battle stations with WHITE CHRISTMAS, SHOO SHOO BABY and that sincere ballad of tender optimism, I'LL BE SEEING YOU.

All the while there were the anecdotes and illustrative comment from the 25 personalities who were invited to contribute, and felt they had something to say. From the early years, Al Rinker on the start of Bing's career; Mary Martin, Ethel Merman and Merle Oberson on his early films. From the middle years there were Dinah Shore, Fred MacMurray, Jane Wyman, Donald O'Connor, and on through Ella, Astaire, Kelly, Danny Kaye, Princess Grace de Monaco to the latter years of Rosemary Clooney, Twiggy, Dean Martin and, of course, Hope...always Hope.

There was worthwhile comment from all these entertainers, and still more from his butler Alan Fisher - who is not a Crosby fan in the sense of liking what WE admire most - and producers Frank Capra and Norman Panama. The latter insisting that despite what we might like to believe the ROAD films were scripted. He might perhaps have left us that illusion!

His career rolled on before us; Bing grew older, but the mannerisms, expressions and sartorial informality remained, growing with him and becoming an embodiment of the man. Television had arrived and Bing had side-stepped it for his comfortable world of readio, records and a film once in a while. But finally he had to get into it, and the small screen proved as conquerable for Bing as all the other entertainment media. The Bing Crosby Show, Hollywood Palace, Bing Crosby Special, with a baker's dozen clips with all his old 'buddies and beaux' from down the years, plus a humourous sequence where his four first family sons try to make him 'hep' with a bopped-up version of PLA-HEEZE (PLEASE)....if you please! But Bing was always able to laugh at himself and still come out the winner.

Our own Twiggy spoke with endearment of her appearance with Bing in his very last Christmas TV special. In their duet of HAVE YOURSELF A MERRY LITTLE CHRISTMAS she told of Bing making her relaxed and comfortable by looking into her eyes. It was a formula that had relaxed many leading ladies. In fact, Bing was noted for always putting his guests at ease and bringing out the best in them. I for one always felt that Bing, too, seemed to slip into a higher gear when performing with another artist. Not from any sense of competition, but more because he LIKED having guests and ENJOYED performing with them; almost as if he were doing it for the sheer fun of it. In that respect it belies his 'loner' image that some would tag him with.

There was just a mention of the Palladium triumph, and the impressive statement by Fortune Magazine:

"CROSBY IS HEAD MAN IN EVERY BRANCH OF AMERICAN ENTERTAINMENT."

- on which William Holden commented: "They might have added, 'First in American hearts'. He could well have expanded his addition to include the continents beyond Bing's homeland, for America's 'Uncle Sam without whiskers' claimed the hearts of most of the civilized world.

Finally, and this WAS finally for Bing - WHITE CHRISTMAS in his last Christmas Special. It was to be the last song that we were to see him sing, and nothing, come what may, however far out pop music goes, whatever St. Cecilia has in

store for us, nothing can ever take that away.

In a programme that led us from Bing's humble beginnings through to fame and unparalleled stardom we were treated to an entertaining lesson in modesty and unassuming talent.

"FROM ALL OF US, THANK YOU BING!"

Editor: As ever, a comprehensive round-up - and enlightening! I must confess the film company ties-up, e.g. Paramount-Universal, are as baffling to me at times as the record companies, Decca/MCA/EMI/CBS and the rest! BUT, does the apparent refusal of Universal to permit Bing's films to be shewn in this great tribute show indicate that THEY are going to produce their own? Seems reasonable....

Invidious, perhaps, to pick out highlights from a show that was one big highlight, but I must say again how impressed I was with Gary, and in particular that moment when he said he often visited the "new family" and of how he would see one of them getting uppitty and of how his eyes would meet Bing's as if to say: "That wouldn't have done in the old days!" Not, he added, that the new home was "free's-ville!" And also, the irresistible films of Mary Frances - and Nathaniel - doing their party pieces.... and finally, the poignancy of that last WHITE CHRISTMAS, and of how Bing walked away, as if to look out of a window.... BERT BISHOP CONTINUES:

WHILE ON RADIO.....

BBC radio, too, felt is appropriate to present a tribute to Bing on the first anniversary of his death - unlike BBC-TV which totally ignored the day; and at 11.33 pm on Radio 4 (in mono, not stereo as advertised in the 'Radio Times')Edward Cole in his series THE UNFORGETTABLES, presented a richly varied programme of words and music that broke away from the hackneyed and unimaginative pattern of the 'best of Bing' which seems to plague so many productions.

Whilst Cole was rather light and a little uncertain by his own narration, it is to his credit that he left most of the entertaining to Bing and his musical associates. For instance, it might now be true that Bing sales figures HAVE reached the 500-million mark, but I doubt that this has been accepted officially.

For the younger listeners, perhaps, there was a quick run-down on Bing's relaxed, easy-going style, but thereafter Cole restricted his spoken contributions to an introduction of what seemed to be personal choice from Bing's records and films and, in one instance, radio.

Quite clearly, 45 minutes is little enough time to cover the career of a man who, by any standards, was a super-star for at least 45 years of his life - working out a minute-a-year by the way! - nevertheless a notable attempt was made to bring into the programmes the wide variation in Bing's vocal expertise. Despite Reg's condemnation of the appellation 'crooner' in the last issue of BING, I find it a likeable word that suits SOME of Bing's recordings in the early years especially, and I like to use it with affection - as opposed to Franklin Pangborn who, in the Mack Sennett 'shorts' had no time at all for crooner Bing!

So in this programme we have Bing the crooner, balladeer, jazz singer, Rhythm Boy, counter-melodist and, as he might have described himself - general all-round journeyman baritone.

The programme brought back quite a number of film memories - though the ex-

pression 'brought back' scarcely applies to the likes of ourselves as with many of the scenes most of us know the dialogue word for word.

All in all it proved a cheery, if brief, listen to Bing to carry us out of that forever fateful fourteenth of October. For the record I chronicle the content of Edward Cole's radio programme:

Where the Blue of the Night: 1945 commercial version with John Scott T.
Harbour Lights: commercial recording.
Incurably romantic: singing lesson to Yves Montand from LET'S MAKE LOVE
Sweet Leilani: commercial recording.
Road to Morocco: film soundtrack recording.
Pat-a-cake routine from ROAD TO ZANZIBAR.
Team Work: film soundtrack from ROAD TO HONG KONG.
Don't Fence me in: commercial recording with Andrews Sisters
Now you has jazz: film soundtrack recording from HIGH SOCIETY
Quicksilver: duet with Peggy Lee from radio broadcast.
Count you blessings: film soundtrack recording from WHITE CHRISTMAS
Blue Skies: duet with Danny Kaye from the film WHITE CHRISTMAS
In the cool, cool, cool of the evening: commercial recording.
Sam's song: commercial recording.
Sunshine cake: commercial recording.
So the bluebirds and the blackbirds got together: from KING OF JAZZ
The pupit scene from film SAY ONE FOR ME
Dialogue with Ingrid Bergman from film BELLS OF ST. MARY'S
Dialogue from film GOING MY WAY
Swinging on a star: from GOING MY WAY film soundtrack
That's what life is all about: from Palladium "live" album

Editor: Oh dear! I hope I'm not getting obscure - or TOO obscure. I only resent "crooner" appellation as a GENERAL or OVERALL categorisation of Bing! "Journeyman baritone" much more acceptable; as a matter of fact, Bert Bishop's mention of Franklin Pangborn's derisive reference to "that crooner" was absolutely accurate as to the general dismissal of an individual as a SINGER in those days, i.e. just a mouther into a microphone, not really a singer. I did allow, too, that Bing crooned - when the song called for it. But I find it irksome that, on account of one or two lullabies and/or ballads Bing should be "dismissed" as a crooner! Please, please say that is all clear now or it will spoil my Christmas.

In writing to you as a new member of the Circle, my wife and I wish to express our thanks to the organiser's of the function which was held at the Mansion House, Roundhay Park, Leeds on Sunday 17th September. We were introduced to the Circle by Peter Diffley of Stockport ten months ago, along with Mr. B. Lucas and his wife of Woodley, Cheshire. We all appreciated the way the meeting was put together, including the old Sennett films which were a real novelty to see. It was also most interesting to listen to Ken Barnes and the knowledge he had of the late Bing due to working with him over the past few years. If only the old Maestro could have hung on for another couple of years, who knows what the two might have achieved?.

Here's hoping the Circle goes on into the future with greater enthusiasm and interest of a great guy who is sadly missed, but who will always be loved for his great warmth, feeling and sincerity.

Sincerely, R. TINDALL (Hyde, Ches).

Thanks very much - we, especially Mike Crampton, appreciates encouragement as much as anyone else - and Mr. Tindall expresses what we all feel, I am certain.

SHOW GOES ON WITHOUT BING

..which is a melancholy headline; but we are resolved not to be gloomy. This story is reprinted from the SAN JOSE MERCURY NEWS of November 12 last, thanks to Les Wilson of Pleasanton, California:

SHOW SLATE: BY VERNON SCOTT

Hollywood (UPI)

ing Crosby's voice echoed through the control booth of a recording studio on Sunset Boulevard as his widow, Kathryn, listened attentively, a smile on her face.

"It's a beautiful voice, isn't it," she said when the last strains of the Christmas carol drifted away.

Kathryn, with her sons Harry and Nathaniel, and daughter Mary Frances, are carrying on the family Christmas tradition by taping this year's annual Crosby Yuletide television show for CBS.

It will have been a year since Bing died, 73, of a heart attack on a golf course in Spain. The past year has been one of deep sorrow for Kathryn, but a busy one as well.

"Its been a time of memories, painful and intense," she said. "I've managed to live one day at a time. I'm doing the things I would have done if Bing were alive. I've worked a great deal, but not as an escape."

Kathryn is writing a book titled A VERY GOOD ROUND - MY LIFE WITH BING. She did a bus and truck tour of 172 cities in 102 days starring in SAME TIME NEXT YEAR and appears with the American Conservatory Theater in San Francisco.

"The pain was so intense I couldn't write things down for the book," Kathryn said. "I dictate into a tape recorder and work with Lee McGrath. We were high school cheerleaders together in Robstown, Texas. The book has a lot of Bing's letters to me. He was a beautiful writer and it expresses a side of Bing people don't know. He showed the depth of his emotions in writing that he never revealed in public."

"We're putting together clips of Bing's old Christmas shows and we sing some songs together. We were all in tears watching those old shows. But they were tears of happy memories. Bing looks so fine and sings as well in the last show he ever did. His Christmas show goes back 40 years to the radio days."

Kathryn continues to live in the family home in Hillsborough. Son Harry, 20, is studying at the London Academy of Music and Dramatic Arts. Nathaniel is in his senior year of high school. Mary Frances, 19, lives in Hollywood.

"I don't find it difficult to continue living in the house with all of Bing's personal mementoes. There was one small thing that was too much for me - the spot where he rested his head on the headboard above the bed. I redid the bedroom, but otherwise the house remains unchanged. Nathaniel and his friends and our two dogs help to fill it up.

"I wasn't a Bing Crosby fan. I loved the man himself, if you know what I mean. I had a wonderful husband and during our 20 years of marriage I never entered a room without knowing he was the most attractive man in it. I'm committed until next June to remain in San Francisco with the American Conservatory Theater appearing in repertory. And I want to stay in our home at

at least that long, until Nathaniel graduates from school.

"Bing does not belong in bronze. He's a living image on film and in photographs and, of course, his music. The tournament brings so many friends together with the family that it is a real celebration of the man and his life."

Editor: First Gary; then Kathryn. Had enough, Mr. C. Thompson?

In the HORIZON programme on 17th November, concerning animal hibernation and the experiment with humans, it ended with Bing's recording of the verse to GOODNIGHT SWEETHEART - "if we could dream forev-er..."....

KEEPING TRACK

BERT BISHOP'S ROUND-UP OF new records.....

This feature is sadly reduced in size and content by what has proved to be a very lean period of releases bycomparison with recent history. Ten years ago, or even less, it would have been almost impossible to maintain a regular column of actual new material but Bing's last years proved, of course, as fruitful in that respect as practically any that had gone before.

It is nice to report, though, that there is SOME new material on LP with a happy promise of some tunefully delectable albums rising on the horizon of the New Year. I'm referring to the Bing with Buddy Cole material that solo, and with Rosemary Clooney, Bing recorded in the '50's and to which Ken Barnes and Pete Martin are about to turn their attention. Something to keep you nail-biting thro' the next quarter! But, for now...

STARS ON SUNDAY BY REQUEST — Curzon Sounds Ltd. CSL 0081 UK Stereo £3.75p

This album, produced by Peter Max Wilson, takes 14 selections from the popular quasi-religious programme of the title that is networked on ITV by Yorkshire Television. Of the featured stars, all but Bing and James Stewart have two tracks apiece. Alas, only one for Bing - and Jimmie Stewart - and here we have Bing reading the well known 'Judge not, that you may not be judged' chapters in the Bible that come from Matthew, Chapter 7, Verses 1-12.

This reading was first broadcast on 16th November 1975 at 7 pm. Then, without accompaniment; but on this presentation there is a tasteful backing of strings that adds depth and a sense of occasion. The sleeve graphics are tasteful, showing on the face a Georgian country house fronted by well-kept lawns and rose-beds. The photograph is framed by a 'cut-out' leafy viewpoint of deepening green that also forms a background for the title and contents, printed in white. Bing gets top billing. The reverse is a banal arrangement of eight five-pointed stars with inset photographs of featured artistes. Bing is first, reading from left to right; there is a sleeve note to the effect that the album has been produced 'in response to the thousands of letters' that ask if the writer's favourite piece of music or reading is on record. For many, it now is.

THE GOLDEN AGE OF AMERICAN RADIO - STARRING BING CROSBY — United Artists UAK 30115 UK Mono £4.49p

Where the blue of the night (intro)
Lady of Spain (Bing)
Hello, Hello (Kay Thompson & William Bros)
For me and my gal (Bing & Judy Garland)
Young at heart (Bing)
Lazy River) Bing & Mills Bros.
Paper Doll)
Zip-a-dee-doo-dah (Bing)
I can dream, can't I? (Bing and Andrews Sisters
Tell me why (Bing and Four Aces)
Two to tango (Bing & Rosemary Clooney)
Mona Lisa (Bing)

(Cont. over

Where is your heart: (Bing)
Lullaby of Broadway: (Bing & Dick Powell)
It might as well be spring: Bing & Geo Burns
Paper Moon: (Bing)
That's a-plenty (Bing & Connee Boswell)
You go to my head: (Bing)
Where the blue of the night (reprise)
If I'd knew you were coming I'd have baked a cake: (Bing and Bob Hope
On A slow boat to China (Bing & Peggy Lee)
(Medley: Bing and Maurice Chevalier)
(You brought a new kind of love to me
(My love parade - Louise - Mimi
You gotta start off each day with a song: (Bing and Jimmy Durante)
You belong to me: (Bing)
Wish you were here: (Bing)
May the good Lord bless and keep you: (Bing, Nat King Cole & Andrews Sisters

This 'air-shot' LP from United Artists offers 24 Bing tracks and three on which he participates verbally. Its a close relation of the Japanese MCA-9301/4 BING CROSBY RADIO SHOW 4-lp Boxed set and the US equivalent, HRB MUSIC COMPANY, BING CROSBY & FRIENDS. However, this single LP offers us 5 new Bing tracks not found on the others - a nice bonus in this full-priced home issue. The five unreleased tracks are:

Where is Your Heart (Bing); That's A-plenty (Bing & Connee); On a Slow boat to China (Bing and Peggy Lee); You belong to me (Bing) and Wish you were Here (Bing)

Sound quality proves to be quite excellent and indicates that Bing's radio material IS to be found in very good fidelity indeed, which bodes well for the future as almost certainly Bing's radio career will be commercially exploited to the benefit of all of us. The period of Bing's career covered dates from 1946 to 1954 and takes in KRAFT MUSIC HALL, PHILCO RADIO TIME and THE BING CROSBY SHOWS for the Chesterfield and General Electric Co., and represents just a tiny portion of the hundreds of hours that Bing stood before a radio mike.

The album was produced by Alan Warner and edited by David Pickett at the Abbey Road Studios, London - and these would be the persons to write to either to thank or ask for more! The front sleeve of the folding cover is delightfully nostalgic with its '30's living room lay out of antimaccassars, flowing china nude female and cabinet wireless. A metal framed photograph of Bing reflects in the polished oak side table, the entire scene colourfully warm. The inner sleeve carries 15 photos of Bing and guests and is faced by a 3-column biography tracing Bing's run up to radio and the ensuing years. The rear sleeve is eye-catching, too, in silver blue on white it lists all the relevant details including the broadcast date of each track. A nice Christmas present - for yourself or for a friend!

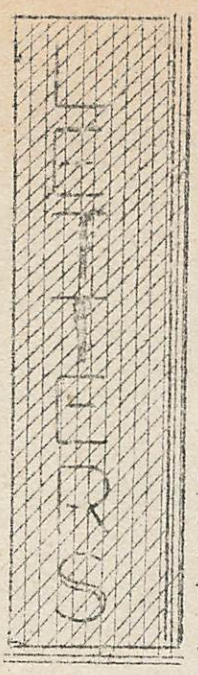
ROSIE SINGS BING : ROSEMARY CLOONEY — Concord Jazz CJ-60

But Beautiful:
Pennies from Heaven:
Blue Skies:
I Surrender, dear:
Where the blue of the night
Its easy to remember
Swinging on a star
Just one more chance.
I wished on the moon.
Too-ra-loo-ra-loo-ral

Contrary to usual practice a list of titles of a non-Bing album is used here because of the special relationship between Bing and Rosemary Clooney over the last 26 years of Bing's life. The accompaniment is by a five-piece modern jazz group that features Jake Hanna of the Bushkin quartet. The arrangements will not be to everybody's liking but the vocals are nicely taken and there is a brief sleeve-note from Kathryn Crosby - making for a nice piece of Crosbyana although it must be understood, Bing is NOT on the record. It is an import and therefore pricey but should be obtainable from specialist jazz shops - or Mike Slipman whose address appears elsewhere.

WHAT'S ON WHAT! AN ANALYSIS: by KEN CROSSLAND

	CBS1	CBS2	CBS3	S/B1	S/B2	JA39	JA40
Can't we talk it over?			0				
Crazy over you	0						
Give me a heart to sing to		0					
Happy-go-lucky-you	0						0
Here is my heart			0				
High Water.				0			
Home on the range			0				
I found you	0						
I guess it had to be that way						0	
I'll follow you		0		0			
I'm hummin', I'm whistling &c				0			
I'm in love again					0		
I'm playing with fire			0		0		
I'm sorry dear.			0			0	
Its within your power			0				
I've got to pass your house		0		0			
I've got to sing a torch song		0					
I would if I could but I can't			0				
Lawd, You made the night too long					0		
Lazy day	0			0			0
Let's put out the lights				0			
Let's spend an evening at home			0		0		
Let's try again			0	0		0	
Linger a little longer					0		
Little Dutch Mill		0			0		
Love me tonight	0						0
Love you funny thing	0				0	0	
Muddy Water					0		
My Angeline			0				
My love			0				
My pet					0		
Orange blossom time			0				
Paradise							0
Ridin' around in the rain		0			0		
Rose of Mandalay	0			0			
Shadows of love		0					
Shadows on the window	0					0	
Shadow waltz		0					
Soft lights & Sweet music					0	0	
Someday we'll meet again			0	0			
Southern medley	0			0			
Starlight	0			0		0	
Street of dreams					0		
Sunshine					0		
There's a cabin in the pines				0			
Try a little tenderness		0					
Waiting at the end of the road	0						
Waltzing in a dream			0				0
We're a couple of soldiers	0						
What do I care, its home.		0					
Where the blue of the night						0	
With summer coming on	0						
Young and healthy		0		0			
You're beautiful tonight my dear		0					
You're getting to be a habit		0					
You're still in my heart	0				0		0
You've got me crying again							



intended for this feature - known to be a great favourite - should be addressed as shewn on the right. Letters dealing with record enquiries, however, may be sent to Bert Bishop or Colin Pugh, while letters specifically on films, queries, added information, and so on, might be addressed to either Fred Reynolds or Keith Parkinson...addresses at front of magazine. Letters are always welcome....constructive criticism, views, news, memories, experiences, the whole gamut of Crosbyana...

Reg Bristo,
7 Greenmeadow Close,
CWMBRAN,
GWENT, NP4 3NR.

STAN AUSTIN, 58 Pear Tree Ave. Yiewsley, West Drayton, Midd'x:

Thanks for the September BING, and in particular the item about the Bing tribute at the National Film Theatre which I attended. I was astonished at the youthful age of many at the cinema - and judging from your pages, many in the ICC now. What right have they to like Bing? When everything is made so easy for them? Just one visit to a record shop and they have all, in one package, the 78s that I struggled so hard to collect so long ago? What do they know of the hard work and the care I lavished on them, so much so that when a bomb-blast moved my record cabinet seven feet, only ONE record was cracked?

What do they know of Bing, who didn't walk home one starry night, his mind in a daze from the sound of LOVE IN BLOOM still ringing in his ears? What can Bing mean to those who didn't sit in a darkened cinema in a sudden hush so profound you could feel it, as Bing joined in with the negro slaves singing SWANEE RIVER? How can they appreciate the boredom and loneliness of a little town in Germany suddenly brightened as the Forces radio played DON'T FENCE ME IN? What can they know of the emotion of holding a baby daughter on your knees while Bing sang IF I HAD MY WAY...YOU WOULD NEVER GROW OLD?

But this is selfish. I mustn't keep, or try to keep, Bing to myself like this. I must relent and let others share him....but they must realise that Bing means many personal emotions that nobody can share. In our day we didn't have this screaming and fainting (which started with Sinatra) and got steadily worse as organised and planned "adulation". In fact, I believe we were so unemotional then that when we went to the cinema, or bought a record, we felt we were the only ones "starry-eyed". It was a secret we had to hug to ourselves...now, many other people are letting down the barriers.

I certainly feel a kinship with Dick Nettleton. A serious message to him - do NOT discard your old 78s. There's a quality on them, even the most battered of them, that they haven't yet captured on LP.

To conclude, as we entered the NFT just before the performance of the Bingfilms they were playing a record of The Boswell Sisters singing - MILLION DOLLAR BABY What a choice!

Editor: All right, all right! I played a little Editorial subterfuge with Stan's letter. He wrote right at the beginning: "This letter is not to be taken too seriously....." Instead, I leave it until now to put that little matter right! So you can put down your indignant pens - it was just a few thoughts that strayed into Stan's mind as he surveyed the modern - and very praiseworthy - modern age of Crosbyana and some of its more youthful devotees. And he did revive some wonderful memories for the over-Fifties, or is it the over-SIXTIES? Bing of course sang SWANEE RIVER with the plantation "slave" choir in MISSISSIPPI. And it was a wonderful moment. I remember it just as Stan does - and picture it every time I hear that song.

BARRY HOLLOWDAY, 6 Heo Green, Wick, Littlehampton, Sussex, BN17 7JB:

I have just bought a newly-published book which may be of interest to the book-buying members. It is called FIGHTING FOR A LAUGH (Entertaining the British and American Armed Forces, 1939-46) by Richard Fawkes, published by Macdonald & Sons, price £6.75. Whilst not essentially a Crosby book, the large format dust-cover bears a very nice photo of Bing (hand-coloured) minus toupee, singing to a hall-full of GI's and apart from this, also being printed again inside. There is also another highly interesting photograph of Bing, a long figure in field fatigue gear, standing on an improvised platform singing to a crowd of troops sitting and standing around him in the Normandy mud. There is mention of Bing, of course, in the text and of how he always insisted on being up where the action was on all his European and Pacific wartime tours.

For anyone who is really interested in the whole spectrum of ENSA and USO activities from start to finish, this very humourously written and lavishly illustrated book is a really good buy.

I was pleased to see that the DAILY EXPRESS recently printed an extract from Les Gaylor's letter of appreciation of the ITV tribute to Bing. He said it had held him "spell-bound" - and so, I think, all of us. Of course, to deal with such a vast subject as Bing Crosby it must have been a problem just what to put in - and what to leave out. Personally, I would have liked Patty and Maxine Andrews to have appeared to give the odd anecdote, and was a little saddened that my two favourites, Connee Boswell and dear old Johnny Mercer were no longer around to do so....

> Editor: We deal with that fine TV tribute in a special ON THE BOX feature in this issue. Am I wrong in thinking that ALL three Andfews have now passed on? I seem to recall the death of the last survivor.

SYLVIA CRELLIN, 127 Glastonbury Rd., Morden, Surrey, SM4 6NY: I haven't read all the new magazine yet as I have just sent it away to have taped and shan't get it back for a few weeks. Dave Carey of the Swing Shop is very good to us; he always lets us know if he gets anything new about Bing and he sent us a new-issue of Bing and the two stories, THE SMALL ONE and THE HAPPY PRINCE. Bing makes a story really sound good. You can't go to sleep when he sings or talks. I also like the stories by Leslie Gaylor.

> Editor: The opening sentence of Sylvia's letter will puzzle you - until I tell you that Sylvia is blind - and I do hope she doesn't mind this revelation. It reveals, I am certain, an entirely unthought of aspect of Crosbyana: that the whole contents of each issue of BING are put onto cassette so that instead of reading BING like you and I, she has to listen to it.....I was stunned when I first heard of this and as is always the case, without getting maudlin, it brings home anew the burdens some people are called upon to bear. We're touched and delighted to have Sylvia in our ranks and are certain she hears the voice of Bing in a way perhaps we with sight never can..... And we're glad to put in Sylvia's good word for Dave Carey of The Swing Shop.

VIC BYNE, 28 Upton Rd., Slough, Berks: I was rather surprised at your answer of 'not knowing' of Bing's propaganda broadcast (raised by Ed. Pacocha, USA). In Chas. Thompson's book BING, p. 121 "He (Bing) even became a secret weapon in his own right! From London he was persuaded to broadcast to Germany and particularly to enemy soldiers. He sang and talked in phonetic German.etc etc.." Sorry I can't help with the content. It would, no doubt, make extremely interesting listening.

> Editor: A good point; I was aware, of course, of this passage in the book mentioned and also aware that Bing had, we were assured, "vetted" it. But somehow, I've never been quite convinced about this activity of Bing's.....more so now. It doesn't SOUND Bing somehow, patriotic as he was.

N.G.(Nick) CARTER, "The Rosiers", 6 Westgate Grove, Canterbury, Kent:

I have been a life-long admirer of Bing - and I'm now well over 60 and retired - and it occurred to me a couple of years ago that it would be nice, and a mark of respect, to write to my idol thanking him for all the pleasure his songs, films and TV appearances had given me over so many years. I didn't expect a reply so was delighted when the following arrived:

> Dear Nick,
>
> Thanks for your very kind letter. If you remember MISSISSIPPI you must be a very loyal supporter indeed! Had a great score by Rodgers and Hart. Some marvellous songs.
> You must have been a baby when JUST ONE MORE CHANCE was popular! I'm glad, also, that you liked the Christmas morning programme, and I hope you got a chance to see the Christmas programme which was on Christmas Eve, I believe, in England, with the whole family and Fred Astaire. Turn out rather well.
> That's a very pretty place where you live and where you keep your record collection - and you say you have some with Bix Beiderbecke. Those are pretty unusual records for anyone to have. I used to room with him when I was with the Whiteman Orchestra. He was a very fine man. Great personality - and genuine talent. In fact, I think he was a genius.
> May be some day we'll meet. I hope so - always you friend,
>
> 29 Jan 1976 Bing.

Inspired by this friendly response, I wondered what I might give to such a world figure (and dollar millionaire) as some token of my regard - and remembered that I had an original Elizabethan document, dated 1563, relating to the cottage in which I live; so I had it framed (seals and all) and posted it off with a modern translation. That brought my second, and sadly, my last letter from Bing:

> Dear Nick,
>
> Thanks for your letter, and thanks very much indeed for the unusual parchment which you send me and for the translation. Particularly grateful for the translation. I don't think I ever could have made any sense out of it otherwise!
> But I see now that its a very rare item and I'm proud to have it, and I'm grateful for your thoughtful generosity. I'm sure it will be a conversation piece around the house.
> We have three or four in staff who are British and they are already talking about it.
> I don't know if ever I'll get around Canterbury, although there's a project afoot to make an album of hymns with the Canterbury Cathedral Choir. If this works out, maybe I could come by and have a spot of tea with you and members of your family. I hope so.
> Again, many thanks - Warmest best wishes....Bing.
>
> 28 May 1976

As you know, the project never did work out and I must remain one of the many fans who never met the great man personally. But a signed photograph which accompanied the first letter (characteristically not mentioned in the letter itself) looks down on me with a friendly smile as I sit in my attic room in this 450-year old cottage, reading your estimable magazine and listening to - if not His Master's Voice, at least the Voice of the Master.
All good wishes...

Editor: We're mostly aware that one of the most incredible facets of the incredible Mr. Crosby was that despite the almost inhuman demands made on his time by his fabulous career he endeavoured (and mostly succeeded) in answering all letters addressed to him. All right, perhaps it was rapid dictation to a string of secretaries, but he did it. I have seen letters from quite early in the 30's and I've been asked: did Bing really write that himself, and is the signature genuine? In all such cases there has been no doubt in my mind at all that the letters and the signatures were quite authentic. Bing had a turn of phrase - and a signature & that was quite distinctive and, for me, quite unmistakeable over that vast period of time.

But an exchange such as Nick Carter has revealed is an especial delight. As I took the opportunity to point out on BBC(Wales) last October, apart from his wonderful voice, his acting, his comedy with people such as Hope, and his talents in so many directions, one should not lose sight of the fact that Bing was a very erudite man. Languages, philosophy, social affairs, human behaviour all had great appeal for him - remember, he has also been likened to Mark Twain for his humour and his philosophies. And like most Americans but to an even more marked degree, the history of Britain was an abiding interest with Bing. So Nick could hardly have bettered his - to use Bing's own description - "thoughtful generosity". That parchment obviously had tremendous appeal for Bing. It is a great pity that Nick did not get to meet Mr. C - though it will be easily recalled that one of the last things Bing discussed before leaving England for that historic last visit to Spain last October was the possible purchase of a house and golf course in Kent. Then Nick's ambition assuredly would have been realised.

> I must confess, however, that this is the first I've heard of the project to sing with the Cathedral Choir in Canterbury! What a prospect - what a tragedy it can never happen. But then, we always cherished the thought that one day Bing would sing with a famous Welsh choir. When I gave a tape-illustrated talk in a South Wales club last year and mentioned this wish I suggested the Morriston Orpheus, or the Treorchy Male Voice - and I was politely interrupted: "Mr. Bristo - its a wonderful idea and I do hope it comes to pass. But don't forget, we have an excellent choir hear in Blaenavon and it would be the thrill of our lives to have Bing sing with us - if ever you have the chance to influence him...." Alas, that too was just two months before October 14, 1977..... Thanks Nick, for sharing your delightful correspondence with us.

GIRVAN PATERSON, 6/23 Paddington Rd., Oakleigh, Victoria 3166, AUSTRALIA:

I wonder if they will film THE BING CROSBY STORY? And who would play Bing? And would they mime to Bing's actual recordings? Personally, I would rather Paramount make a film of some great film clips from all of his movies. It would surely make absorbing entertainment. I would much rather this than seeing someone trying to be him. I wonder what the thoughts of others are on this?

> Editor: Quite a debating point...I think I would prefer to see a discerningly prepared collection of clips; on the other hand, I've seen Gary mentioned as possibly a good candidate to play the part of his father in such a film. But miming to Dad's voice, of course. Any other views on this will be welcome.

PROMPT RENEWAL OF SUDS. WHEN THE "X" INDICATES (SEE FRONT) IS OF GREAT ASSISTANCE IN THESE PRICE-SPIRALLING TIMES: AND I HAVE BEEN ASSAILED BY SOME MEMBERS FOR ALLOWING A SECOND "X" IN RED, SAYING NO-ONE FORGETS BING FOR SIX MONTHS! AND ITS NOT FAIR TO THOSE WHO DO REMEMBER....WELL, ITS SUCH A FEW CONCERNED THAT I'LL CONTINUE TO BE SOFT-HEADED!

HOLD ON TO YOUR HAT!

In this feature members are welcome, in fact encouraged, to advertise their wants and disposals in Crosbyana - records, pictures, books, films &c. Please endeavour to write them on a separate sheet of paper as this considerably assists collation and helps to ensure inclusion. If lengthy lists of records are being offered invite SAE for lists as it is desirable to keep individual advertisements down to, say, half-a-dozen lines. If particular songs are required state whether or not a tape dubbing is acceptable in lieu of the record - tho' for legal copyright reasons we cannot, obviously, advertise the sale of tapes/cassettes of commercial material. Radio material is in a rather different category and some of the very early Crosby material would now seem to be out of copyright, at least as [illegible] ica is concerned. Any members, especially those who are now dealing in records, particularly those imported, who wish to advertise they may go beyond the 6-lines stipulated by arrangement with the Editor.

Every effort is made to confirm the bona-fides of advertisers but in the last analysis it is up to members themselves to satisfy themselves, before parting with cash if possble, that they are making an equitable deal.

BILL LIVESEY, 28 Railway Terrace, Brierfield, Burnley, Lancs: What offers? BING'S GOLDEN TREASURY "THE SONGS I LOVE" (LONGINES) 6-record set in excellent condition; BING CROSBY'S ALL-STAR PHILCO SHOW LP2001 ASP and BING CROSBY'S ALL-STAR CHESTERFIELD SHOW LP2000 (these are the elusive ICC issues referred to in the LPography); and DERBINGLE 10" Fontana album in original sleeve. Will sell as one item or split.

PETER DIFFLEY, 7 Heath Rd., Cale Green, Stockport, Ches., may still be able to help you with THE FILMS OF BING CROSBY, see last issue. Already it is not easy to find in the shops; also THE ONE AND ONLY BING if finding difficult.

Non-commercial tapings of good quality are offered by the following, write with wants or enquiry with SAE:

Arthur Blood, 597 Osmaston Rd. Derby, DE2 8NE
George Harwood, 5 Glebe Rd., Hemingford Grey, Huntingdon, Cambs PE18
Stan Austin, 58 Pear Tree Ave., Yiewsley, West Drayton, Midd'x(9DS
Arnold Baker, Cherrytree House, 48 Groomsport Rd., Bangor, Co. Down,
G.A.Jones, 26 Dainton House, Brunel Estate, Great Western) N.I.
Rd., London, W.2.

DENNIS STEELE, 57 Graveleythorpe Rd., Leeds, 15, W. Yorks has for sale some very interesting records: 12" HMV CLP 1088 BING SINGS WHILE BREGMAN SWINGS Ace of Hearts AH40 Bing The Early 30's Vol 1 and the following 10" LPs: HMV DLP 1106 SALUTE TO BIX: FONTA TFR 6002 DER BINGLE: BRUNS LA8724 COUNTRY STYLE: LA 8687 COLLECTORS CLASSICS VOL 1: LA 8726 CLASSICS VOL : LA 8732 CLASSICS VOL 5: LA8742 CLASSICS VOL 6: LA8740 BING, THE EARLY 30's Vol 1: LA 8741 BING EARLY 30's Vol 2

JOHN BASSETT extends an invitation to all ICC members living in the vicinity of Southend-on-Sea (Chelmsford, Rayleigh, Hockley, Canewdon, etc) to contact him regarding a get-together at BINGVILLE, 15 Oast Way, Rochford, Essex, SS4 1RZ. Films will be shewn, items of Crosbyana bought and sold or exchanged, and Bing's Christmas message tapes played. A date will be arranged once a sufficient number of local members have expressed their interest.

GORDON THOMAS, 50 Barnstock, Bretton, Peterborough, PE3 8EH extends a similar invitation to members in HIS vicinity.

A. PARKER, 10 Heath Park Avenue, Skircoat Road, Halifax, W. Yorks (phone (0422) 66563: Please can anyone put a good recording of Part 12 (IN THE GROOVE) of the Radio-2 BING CROSBY STORY on to the "B" Track of my own cassette tape (TDK D-C120)? Part 11 is already on the "A" track.

(Editor: I know there will be ready response to this but remember that C120 cassettes can be tricky. Indeed, I've seen recorders where the advice is NOT to use such cassettes owing to the extreme thin-ness of the tape. I mention this in order that kind-hearted members won't wreck Mr. Parker's "A" track!)

DEREK COLLINGE, 41 Marsden Hall Rd., Nelson, Lancs, BB9 9PA would like to correspond with any members in his own age group (27): overseas members that is.

JOHN W. BIGNELL, 21 St. Andrews Avenue, Wembley, Midd'x: Has for sale or exchange - BING'S HOLLYWOOD BING 3 Pocketful of Dreams in exc. condition; also HOW THE WEST WAS WON - RCA Japanese issue 2-LP set in mint (unplayed) new condition. WANTS INCLUDE: Bruns. LAT8154 HIGH TOR: Decca DL8269 BLUE HAWAII: DL8374 SOME FINE OLD CHESTNUTS: DL8687 ARCUND THE WORLD WITH BING: Disneyland ST3998 GOLDILOCKS: Festival DL30-360 HAPPY ANNIVERSARY SONGS: GALA GLP 351 ALI BABA & 40 THIVES: REPRISE R6106 RETURN TO PARADISE ISLAND

* * * \

6. 45 Polish Muza - PLEASE/DID YOU EVER SEE A DREAM WALKING
7. 45 MGM 1107 Demo record MUSKRAT RAMBLE/DARDANELLA
8. 45 Daybreak: TIE A YELLOW RIBBON/ &c.
9. 45 Reprise demo disc (cover only autographed) STEP TO THE REAR &c.
10. 45 Hello out there in Radioland CSP AUS 11746
11. 45 Daybreak: ITS NOT WHERE YOU START; reverse label unprinted
12. RCA Collectors item No. 2 E3C57922: YOU TOOK ADVANTAGE....
13. Reprise demo disc: FAR FROM HOME/HOW GREEN WAS MY VALLEY
14. Phonocard: BECAUSE
15. Chord 7" You're the only star. (7" "LP")
16. Daybreak D1001 AND THE BELLS RANG/TIME TO BE JOLLY
17. 1945 22-page booklet VOCAL JAZZ, picture of Bing on cover.
18. 20th Pro-Am Golf Magazine.

(End of autographed items)

SECTION 2: Best offers over £1 for the following LPs - UAL35568 - Amos AAS 7001 - DAYBREAK DR 2014 - Windmill 190 - Met Aust. 2356141 - Biograph BLPC 13 - RCA LPV 584 - Wallaby PRELUDE TO IMMORTALITY.

Best offers over 40p each for the following 45s: US Dec 9-23777 Silent Night/Adeste Fidelis: DB DAS 402 TIE A YELLOW RIBBON/ITS NOT WHERE YOU START: D/B D1001 TIME TO BE JOLLY/BELLS RANG: Amos AJB 111 LONELY STREET/HEY JUDE: Amos AJB 116 ITS ALL IN THE GAME/MORE AND MORE. MCA MU 111 WHITE CHRISTMAS/GOD REST YE MERRY GENTLEMEN: US UP36179 WHEN A CHILD IS BORN/WHAT I DID FOR LOVE Demon record. UP36025 I LOVE TO DANCE/GOOD OLD TUNES UP35852 THAT'S WHAT LIFE IS ALL ABOUT/PLEASURE OF YOUR COMPANY.

Best offer for LONDON PALLADIUM PROGRAMME 1976.

Best offer over 30p SHELL ADVERT. SHEET MUSIC

Best offer over £2 for following cassettes: A TIME TO BE JOLLY - BING 'N BASIE: THAT'S ENTERTAINMENT Pts. 1 and 2: A COUPLE OF SONG & DANCE MEN - HEY JUDE - SPECIAL MAGIC OF - HIGH SOCIETY - J. GARLAND PORTRAIT IN SONG - THE UNFORGETTABLE JUDY - FRED ASTIRE ATTITUDE DANCING.

SECTION 3: AUCTION - Highest bid wins:

1. 10 cigarette cards of Bing.
2. LP "Cangeroo" Mets 008 Mexican LP with EP inserted in cover (of various artists) LP content same as MFP 1240.
3. 2½" dia blazer badge B.C. PRO AM)
4. 3" dia " " " " " } all embroidered in green/gold
5. 3½" dia " " " " ")
6. 2 booklets from Crosby Library Conzaga. One is 6 pages and pics, other is CROSBY LIBRARY by Wilfred Schoenberg (1963) 32 pages and some pics.
7. 6 identification ribbons for gold pro-am 1½" x 6" various colours and dates, for "Official" contestants, "T.V." and "GUEST".
8. 1 packet containing 30 items of Pro-Am golf, i.e. programmes, tickets, menus, shot cards, car-stickers, etc. etc.
9. 1 packet containing 1 metal booster badge Pro-Am; 1 plastic ditto (both picture Bing) 1 metal badge 1962 38th L.A. Open Golf for member; 2 of Bing's passes for baseball (1961)
10. 1 packet containing USO programme 1968; good pics Bing 43 pages, Masonic programme (folder), Uris Theatre programme (booklet), 3 Hollywood Pace posters 17" x 6½" listing programme, 4 other small programmes, and one ticket for 1961 Wembley Show.

It only needs to add that these items will probably never again be obtainable. Bids to Vera please, and not the Editor. Three months gives all overseas members the opportunity to bid.

"BING" TIES in maroon or dark blue, with the silhouette motif in gold can be obtained from:

Either tie can be worn with virtually any colour suit.	RON BAXTER THE BADGE CENTRE 45 ROPERGATE, PONTEFRACT, W. YORKS WF8 1JY (Tel 702951)	Price is £1.60p post paid.

Excellent Christmas presents!

THE SOUTHERN BING CROSBY TRIBUTE CLUB is organised by PHIL CLARKE, 69 Walden Rd., Stanshaw, Portsmouth, it holds regular - and I gather, highly delightful meetings there - of people living in the South. Films and video tapes of Bing are shewn. In this connection Phil invites all members interested in Crosby films and video tapes and the acquisition of same, to write to him. Phil's "Southern" sports a Bing-badge, available to anyone at £3.30 post paid. All members within reach are invited to attend the meetings - but write first to Phil for details.

At the Northern (eastern) end of the country, FRANK MURPHY promotes THE BING CROSBY PHOTO CLUB, and its attendant publication BING PICTORIAL. Facilities of this are open to ICC members as associates. The club specialises in the photograph facet of the Crosby career. Separate membership, bringing BING PICTORIAL, is £2.50 per annum and in addition to cassettes, pictures &c. it offers BING notepaper. An SAE to Frank for all details. There is a report elsewhere in this issue of the event held to commemorate the first anniversary of Bing's death.

MISS OLIVE GREGORY, "Ebenezer" 4 Lyndhurst Rd. Meols, Hoylake, Wirral, L47 7BP: I am very anxious to obtain the sheet-music of Bing's ONCE AND FOR ALWAYS. I would pay a reasonable price but cannot go too high as I am a victim of the contemporary disease - redundant! But I really am most anxious to obtain this particular song.

KEITH RICHMOND, 27 Glebelands, Pulborough, West Sussex, RH20 2BZ: I want the following if anyone can help please:

1. 45rpm single: It's not how you start/Tie a Yellow Ribbon
2. AH 122 BING IN PARIS.
3. AH 1/17/24 OLD MASTERS, VOLS. 1, 2, and 3.

TONY McCORMACK, 29 Garth Rd., Morden, Surrey, would be most interested to know if anyone has the Pasadena TV show on video cassette. (Suggest contacting Phil Clarke - and by the way, several readers have asked us to mention the help they have received from Phil. It gives us pleasure to record this fact.

MRS. R. CHESTER, 48 Milton Rd. Hanwell, London, W.7. has a number of cassettes (presumably of non-commercial material) she is willing to copy. Send SAE for lists.

If anyone has a copy of BING No. 42 they can spare, Mrs. MARGARET McCUNE 34 High Carnegie Rd. Port Glasgow, PA14 6BX would be most grateful.

THE BING CROSBY MINI DISCOGRAPHY, 1926-1977 IS AVAILABLE AT £1.50p post paid THE BING CROSBY LP-OGRAPHY, LIKELY SOON TO BE A RARE ITEM, IS JUST AVAILABLE AT £2.50, post paid. OVERSEAS BY AIRMAIL FOR £2.00 and £3.00 respectively - from REG BRISTO, 7 GREENMEADOW CLOSE, CWMBRAN, GWENT, NP4 3NR.

THE BING CROSBY PHOTO CLUB continues it's service to members of THE INTERNATIONAL CROSBY CIRCLE..

Please make all P.O.'s and cheques payable to Frank Murphy and send them direct to 32 Ferndale Ave, Wallsend, Tyneand Wear, NE28 7NE. U.K.

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SPECIAL BONUS OFFER - order all 10 for only £4 ($8.00) airmail $6 extra.

SG1..Bing and Gary action shot - outdoor benefit 1950's
SG2..Bing, a solo shot, same benefit
SG3..Bing and Kathryn inside wine store - 1950's
SG4..Bing and Kathryn with shark fishing trophies
SG5..Bing, Frank Sinatra, Dean Martin "Robin"
SG6..Bing and Dixie, 1930's
SG7..Bing and Frances Langford - mike shot 1940's
SG8..Bing and Lindsay - fishing trip 1950's
SG9..Bing and the 'Clan' incl Phil Crosby 'Robin'
SG10.Bing - a super candid from the 40's.

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BING KATHRYN and FAMILY and FRIENDS ON-STAGE AT THE URIS THEATRE New York - December 1976

12 magnificent action shots exclusive to The Bing Crosbyy Photo Club.

10c..Bing and Kathryn-pose one
11c..Bing and Kathryn-pose two
11c..Bing and Rosie Clooney-pose one
13c..Bing and Rosie Clooney pose two
14c..Bing and Rosie Clooney pose three
15c..Bing and Ted Rogers-pose one
16c..Bing and Ted Rogers-pose two
17c..Bing and Mary Frances
18c..Bing, a solo-pose one
19c..Bing, a solo-pose two
20c..Bing and family
21c..Bing and family, with Ted and Rosie - a standing ovation.

PLEASE ORDER BY PHOTO NUMBER ONLY.

Our complete PHOTO CATALOGUE (to August 1978) is still available in limited supply at 60p ($1.50) air-mail $3.00

It contains a full listing of fast expanding black and white catalogue of 240 different Crosby shots - together with a full listing of 66 superb colour shots, many of them exclusives gleaned from many sources throughout the world. (Adv. for BING CROSBY PHOTO CLUB) --------

The first annual tribute organised by Frank Murphy turned out to be highly successful with a capacity audience that had to be limited to the hotel's resources. Frank Murphy, assisted by Mike Crampton and Bob Jones acted as the MC's while a big feature was provided by Johnny Jones (N. Ireland) in the form of a series of recorded greetings from such personalities as Kathryn Crosby, Leo Lynn, Nancy Briggs, Vera Smith and Lilian Murphy - from the Crosby office in the States, of course, and yours truly Reg Bristo, with greetings from the ICC to the Crosby fans of the North-East. During the morning of the 14th Frank presented a 3-hour Crosby programme over the hospitals network and according to reports more than 6000 patients tuned in to the programme - practically 100 per cent, in fact. One interesting feature was that Kathryn expressed the view that perhaps the date of Bing's birth, rather than of his death, might be a better cause for celebration. Even so, Frank Murphy feels that October 14 is likely to become a firm date - and event - in the North East. BC/TE 26 is a cassette compiled over the above-mentioned greetings, plus items from the show and radio hospitals broadcast. It costs £2.75 (six dollars) from Frank....air mail two dollars extra.

MIKE SLIPMAN 'RARE RECORDINGS' 153 Brooklyn Gdns, Edgware, Midd'x HA8 8SB

Offers the following albums all at special prices for members of the ICC.

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MIKE OMITTED TO MENTION POST & PACKING CHARGES BUT NO DOUBT THE ABOVE PRICES ARE EXCLUSIVE OF SUCH SO THAT THE NECESSARY ALLOWANCE SHOULD BE MADE. IF ENQUIRING ENCLOSE SAE PLEASE, AND DIRECT TO THE ADDRESS SHEWN. HE ALSO COVERS OTHER ARTISTS, E.G. SINATRA, JOLSON, DICK HAYMES, JUDY GARLAND AND VARIOUS USA RADIO SHOWS.

CALLING ALL MIDLANDS MEMBERS ! ! ! The efforts of MR. G. R. T. (Tom) Evans in promoting a Midlands Circle are gaining pace. A "NOSTALGIC CHARITY DANCE" was held on October 4th last at Beeches Road Social Club, Walsall. Music was provided by the Keith Vernon Sound with "surprise vocalist". As far as I can trace Tom hasn't told me who this was! For an initial effort it was most encouraging - and one delightful consequence is that Tom is renewing friendship with Crosby friends he knew before the War! It is the intention of this Midlands branch to contribute their profits to charities. Midlands members are urged to get in touch with Tom and help his efforts along; Crosby evenings are a delight wherever they are held.

Tom's address is 84 Brereton Road, New Invention, Willenhall, Staffs, WV12 5LR - and we hope Tom's wife is fully recovered from her operation.